Religion and Life

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Religion and Life

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HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL

Harper & Brothers, Publishers
New York and London
1914

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
PUBLISHED FEBRUARY, 1914
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PREFACE

I OFFER this book with mingled feelings of hesitation and of hope. Much of my own religious life and experience is contained within its covers, and for this reason I cannot help shrinking from revealing that which is personally dear and sacred. On the other hand, I hope that thoughts which have brightened my own life and which have sustained others when uttered may also be helpful when read.

The unity of this volume lies in its subject-matter, Religion in its relation to Life. As both these words are words of unending richness and variety, the discussion of them must bear the same characteristics. We cannot grasp religion in its totality any more than we can grasp life. In attempting to do so we succeed in laying hold only of a pale abstraction, the ghost of both. What we may aim at is depicting certain phases of the great drama of man's life in the presence of the Infinite which we have torn from reality and have invested with the spirit and breath of our own souls. As this book is frankly, avowedly, and positively Christian, I have established it as far as possible on texts of the Scriptures. Some of these studies deal

with the social aspects of religion, with the mighty spirit of aspiration and unrest which penetrates the world to-day, and with the difficult problems presented to Christianity by the tendencies of contemporary society. Some chapters are concerned with the problem of the personal life. Others discuss important phases of the life and teaching of Jesus, the meaning of his death and the reality of his resurrection. The method I have employed is the only one I know, the suppression of no truth and the ignoring of no felt difficulty, sincerity and simplicity of statement, and the unostentatious use of what knowledge I possess. I am keenly aware how little real originality this or any other serious and comprehensive statement of such themes can boast at the present day. Every one of these great thoughts has come down to us through countless other minds. All that we can hope to attain is the application of old truths to new conditions or new statements of the eternal problems. As this work is most simple in character and intended to be popular in its use, I have refrained from burdening its pages with references and quotations, and in preparing it I have intentionally avoided consulting the works of other men. Yet I am deeply sensible of how much I owe to such works, and I acknowledge in advance any obligations which may be detected by the well-read.

There are two qualities of this work to which I may be permitted to call attention. Its estimates of Christianity and of the person and character of Jesus

are based on a lifelong study of the New Testament and upon a fair knowledge of the methods and results of modern criticism, while the parts bearing upon human life have been written in the light of an unusual opportunity to study the lives and consciences of men and women. The result of this twofold training is a faith that rests on some knowledge and on much experience, and I ask the reader to believe that when I describe the effects of religious belief on human life I am not speaking of that which I do not know. There is no peace so deep as the peace of God and the normal effect of this costly possession is the heightening of all our physical and spiritual faculties, access to all that is deepest and most beautiful in human nature and an eager desire to extend to others the blessings we have received. As for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the better he is understood the more he will be loved and adored. We do not begin to realize how much we owe to him. The old rationalistic attempt to bring Jesus down to our level has crumbled by reason of its inherent weakness and because he ever escapes us and towers above us. For a long time no new "liberal" Life of Jesus will be written by men sufficiently instructed to be able to undertake this arduous and fruitless task. While the spirit and the influence of Jesus were never more apparent in human life than they are to-day, his person has receded to his own century and to his solitary and unique place in human history. What remains for us is not to bring Christ up from the dead, but to consecrate ourselves to him

under whose banner every thinking man must ultimately march and to cause his ideals to be realized in this world.

ELWOOD WORCESTER.

Emmanuel Church, Boston.
November, 1913.

Part I

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF RELIGION

RELIGION AND LIFE

I

CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL QUESTION

For the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost.
—St. Luke xix: 10.

WONDERFUL as Jesus' teaching was, the impression he produced on the world was not by word alone. He found himself in a world of sin and misery which he ever drew closer and closer to himself, and in which he still dwells as its embodied conscience. No thought is oftener in our minds than whether Jesus would approve our conduct. No question is more earnestly asked than what would Jesus think of this or that fact of our modern life.

He did not deny the reality of this world, nor pretend that it is the best possible world, nor did he say that man is a perfect being. But he offered us a religion of redemption and of progress. To the intellectual needs of man he offered a religion so pure, so simple, so vital, so free from superstition and unreason that it has ever been the chief source of light and of progress to the nations that have accepted it.

To man's moral weakness Jesus offered the example of a perfect life and a workable method of attaining that life. He perceived that the root of man's sin is selfishness and that to uproot selfishness from the human heart is to uproot sin. It is selfishness which leads me to sacrifice another's happiness to my own, and if I am a Christian I cannot find happiness in this way. It is selfishness which leads me to seek and to demand the best for myself, leaving only the worthless refuse for others. It is selfishness which causes men to surround themselves with every form of luxury while they are obliged to lower their eyelids in the presence of the misery of their fellow-men. It is selfishness which induces us to use and exploit men as means to our ends, regardless of their good or of our country's good.

The world has always regarded wealth and power, costly possessions, means of pleasure, objects of art as the most precious and interesting things it possesses. It will bow down to money, it will bow down to power, it will not bow down to love nor to sorrow. Jesus emphatically declared that men and women are far more precious and that in comparison with them things are nothing.

It is difficult to see how two views of life so radically different can coexist. Two generations ago Abraham Lincoln foretold the downfall of human slavery or the downfall of this republic on the ground that a house so deeply divided against itself could not stand. To-day the same prediction may be made of modern society and the Christian religion. They cannot continue to co-

exist and to enjoy free expression, because in so many respects one is the flagrant contradiction of the other.

Christianity teaches the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Its most sacred doctrine is the sacredness of human life. The object of its utmost solicitude is the downmost man. It is a religion for all, which affirms that one man's happiness is as dear and precious to God as another's, a religion of justice and of social obligations, a religion of ministering love and self-sacrifice.

Modern society is built upon the accursed law: "To him that hath shall be given." It seeks the advantage—I will not say the happiness—of the few at the expense of the many. It regards men simply as instruments and agents and as means to an end—this end being self-aggrandizement. It regards self-seeking as the natural and legitimate end of life, and it calls the proud happy; and while doing all these things it professes to adore and to obey Jesus Christ.

The contradiction is too glaring, and if we keep silent the very stones—by which I mean chiefly Bernard Shaw—will cry out. Yet we have many excuses. The true character of Jesus and the nature of his religion, once well known to the Church and for more than four hundred years gloriously displayed to the world, have long been obscured. But to-day the purposes of Jesus are as well understood as they ever will be until they are put into practice. For more than a century the greatest scholars and many of the greatest minds of the world have been at work on this theme, and now the

results of their patient labors are about to make themselves felt in the world. Much as still remains to be done in the Life of the Lord, we have reached a point at which it is impossible to make the Christian Religion mean what we wish it to mean. In other words, we cannot falsify and alter the teachings of Jesus any longer to suit our own purposes.

The modern world, having discovered what Christianity in its main outlines really is, may reject it as its most deadly foe, but it will not go on innocently singing revolutionary little chants like the Magnificat, which celebrate its own downfall, without perception of their meaning. It may ban Christianity and try to uproot it from the earth, but it is not base enough to continue to profess it while trampling its most sacred injunctions under foot.

And yet I do not believe that this is what will really happen. The world is not so ready to part with Jesus Christ and to lose his companionship as it appears to be, for it has no one to take his place. It perceives that the nations which have been inspired by him have been the best inspired and it knows that the most virile, conquering, and enduring fact in our civilization is Christianity. Other societies with keener insight than ours have tried to put an end to the influence of Jesus and to destroy his cause by fire and sword when it was defended by only a few poor and obscure Christians, but it proved too great a task for the whole might of the Roman Empire. Other nations in the past have trod the path we are beginning

to tread. Why is it that they have failed and fallen either by bloody revolution or by their own inward weakness and decay? Whether we look at the rich or at the poor, so far as they are uninfluenced by Jesus Christ, we do not see much that is alluring and inspiring or that contains much hope for the future.

Nor does it require much perspicacity to see that the same tendencies in modern life which are inimical to Christianity are also dangerous to our country as a whole. The institution of American Democracy is threatened by the same aggressions. We are so accustomed to the scandals of our public life and to the crimes against America which are daily recorded in our papers that we forget with how ominous a sound these revelations fall on the ears of the rest of the world. American Democracy as the expression of the political and social institutions of a free and united people is perhaps the simplest, the most logical and the least burdensome form of government yet devised by man. But as an oligarchy, a plutocracy, the form of our government is an absurdity; it is the weakest form because most exposed to corruption.

Rome flourished and grew to greatness as a republic. Having lost her liberties in reality, it did not take her long to lose them also in name; and, stupendous as the Roman Empire became, it lived in the consciousness of its end. What killed Rome was the extinction of an independent middle class of virtuous and patriotic citizens, leaving her only the very rich and the very poor. For several centuries the rich did something to

make atonement to the poor. They had their form of social service which consisted in the free distribution of bread and the games of the circus, but during these years Rome lost all her vitality, and she sank beneath a swarm of barbarians which Julius Cæsar would have withered with a frown.

We are moving in the same direction to-day. The churches and social service are doing their best to heal the wounds that our industrial and social system is inflicting. Baseball and football have taken the place of the old Roman games and amuse many. Yet what reason have we to suppose that the end will be different? American Democracy has as much to fear from the aggressions of capitalism as has Christianity. But of the two Christianity has much the better means of defense. Christianity is far more necessary to Democracy than Democracy is to Christianity. Christianity can bide its time. If it is not successful at first, it will be successful at last. For this is the peculiarity of evil. The higher it rises, the wider it spreads, the deeper it strikes its roots, the more certain and imminent is its downfall. It is only necessary to allow selfishness and rapacity free play for them to compass their own ruin. When the danger becomes pressing, relief comes.

What is retarding the progress and the success of Christianity to-day is that its real principles and its incredible demands are so little understood and are so feared by those who profess it. They involve such a radical change of our whole view of life and manner of

living that we who have reached middle age stand aghast and are as mute as fishes at the prospect. It was not for nothing that Jesus said, "Change your minds, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Our children who are growing up under changed and changing conditions and who hear social questions constantly discussed by honored teachers in schools and colleges and universities feel very differently in regard to them. We often regret that they have not more religion, but perhaps they will look back and blush to think we had not more.

For this reason I have the utmost sympathy for men of power who feel that things are not as they should be, yet know not how to rectify them, for I know by long experience how good and honorable and true in heart such men frequently are. Many of them have faithfully practised the religion they learned as children, when these matters were never mentioned, and, while really believing that religion has nothing to do either with business or with politics, they have been through life just and humane. Many of them have tacitly repudiated the methods by which they gained their fortunes by giving them away. Even if such men desire to practise the religion which they feel now to be true, or more true, they believe it to be impossible for them to do so. They have duties and responsibilities to their stockholders and to those who have confided savings to their care. If they were to attempt to disregard the great law of supply and demand which regulates the price of labor, to shorten hours, to ab-

stain from child labor and from overburdening women; if they were to pension old age, and to employ all those means of sa eguarding the life and the health of their workers which humanity dictates, they would fail and have to retire from business, while others, less scrupulous, would succeed.

Why, then, should we concern ourselves with such matters at all? Simply because we cannot help it, because the price we are paying for our success in the embittering and degradation of human life is too great. A generation ago, under conditions which probably were just as bad, the great problem of human happiness was scarcely mentioned. To-day it is upon every tongue. In another generation those of us who are alive will be cheerfully at work at it.

Do not imagine in all this that Christianity comes forward as the enemy of any one or of any part of society. Christianity is the friend of all. In calling us away from our narrow, restricted lives to the service of the common good Christ is offering us the only life that is worthy of his disciples. Many have already enlisted themselves under his banner and bear his easy yoke, and they know that in the service of others they have found a life so sweet, so purifying, so absorbingly interesting that they would not exchange it for anything this world can offer them; and the more personal and vital our ministry, the greater the reward.

But if, instead of a few, all the good were enlisted in this cause; if instead of merely striving to repair the waste and ravages our industrial system is inflicting

and drying up some pools in this ocean of tears the source of sorrow could be closed and the gates of happiness opened, and life and labor should become a blessing instead of a curse; if instead of class division and mutual suspicion we were all united in a common faith and a common purpose; if instead of feeling our religion to be a reproach to us we could feel its joy, experience its blessing, and prove its truth by its results, how infinitely our lives would be enlarged!

It is a matter of shame and of general amazement that to-day Christianity is doing so little to make its ideals realized in the world. Why is it, with the enormous prestige, learning, wealth, and devotion of the churches and their members, that such conditions should exist as are described in Charles Booth's *East London*, or such as are visible in this city and in every great center of industry and civilization? Can a greater affront to the love of Jesus Christ be imagined? The fault does not lie in him. It is not that the ideals and purposes of Jesus Christ have been found mistaken or futile. It is because the churches and their members are not free to carry those ideas out. Jesus, though poor, came into this world to make many rich. Our present system, while making a few rich, has the effect of making many poor.

Christianity has proved itself wonderfully flexible and adaptive. It has flourished under every form of government, and often it has flourished best when outlawed by all government; but to realize its ideals when they conflict with human interests it must be free. In

former days when the Church throve in the face of persecution and compelled the reformation of the society which would destroy it Christians stood outside of that society and gave their whole allegiance to Jesus Christ. The difficulty to-day is that we are all members of the society which is doing the evil, and directly and indirectly we are dependent on it and equally responsible for it. Churches and members of churches, bishops, priests, and deacons, all are caught in the same snare.

Therefore the voices which are raised in pity and in rebuke come for the most part from outside the churches. But it is obvious that if the greatest movement of modern times, a movement to realize one of the most sacred purposes of Jesus Christ, should take place without the help of the Church and in a spirit of hostility to it, it would stultify Christianity, alienate the people from it, and do an injury to the cause of Christ from which it could hardly recover. Charity, of course, is out of the question unless we wish to tread with open eyes the path on which the Roman Empire went. What we need is a reconstruction of our whole social system and of our ideals of the purpose of life, a program that will give to every man an opportunity to work out his own salvation.

Let me add one word in vindication of our Lord Jesus Christ. A great many educated persons to-day criticize and belittle Jesus because he appeared to asquiesce in an order of things which he knew to be unjust and intolerable, and because he preached, as

they say, resignation in the face of existing evils. Such a criticism rests on a misapprehension of Christ's real thought and purpose. Jesus was so deeply impatient of the wrongs and injustices of the world that he deliberately proposed to end them by ending the world itself, and with this intention he voluntarily laid down his life on the cross, expecting thereby to usher in the kindgom of God in which God's will should be done on earth as it is in heaven. It was the will of God that an even more stupendous task should devolve on him through his death—that of saving this existing world, of overcoming evil by good, not by power, of regenerating men and nations by moral means. And he is equal to this task if those who call themselves his servants and through whom he naturally works will help him and not thwart him. In his life he showed his disposition toward human sorrow by surrounding himself by its victims and by giving them peace and life. He has converted the most abhorred object in the world, his own cross, into the holiest object. Him we may deny, but his achievement never; and if the world has to choose between Jesus Christ and those things which it cannot and dare not bring into his presence I do not believe that its choice will be doubtful.

II

THE LAW OF INCREASE

For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.
—St. Matthew xxv: 29.

THIS saying is the result of one of our Saviour's deep glances into Nature. It describes not so much what Jesus desired to see in the Kingdom of God as what years of experience in this world had taught him. I think I am safe in saying it contains at least the germ of the theory of Darwin. Christ had just related a parable in which he had shown how easy it is for a man who has received five talents to double his capital by judicious trading, and how hard it is for the man who has received only one talent to do much with it. When the King returns, the man with the ten talents is further rewarded by being made ruler over ten cities, while the poor fellow who had wrapped his one talent up in a napkin and had hidden it away in the ground for safe-keeping is obliged to relinquish his sole possession; and he has the further mortification of seeing it given to a man who has already more than he needs. The rich becomes richer and the poor becomes poorer.

I presume that most of us do not have to live very long before we realize that this is the way of the world, and that this is a very true parable of Nature. It has an inspiring side, and it has a depressing and terrible side. It is a comfortable thought to the man who has five talents, but it is apt to be a very sad thought to the man who has only one talent. A little consideration will show how true this is. A man who has always enjoyed good health does not need to be anxious or constantly on his guard for fear he shall fall ill. When he is bidden to a feast he does not ask himself, "I wonder whether it will agree with me?" he goes. He does not fear a sleepless night every time he is obliged to overwork a little. An epidemic visits his town; he is exposed and he is spared. His iron constitution is proof against disease; "A thousand may fall beside him and ten thousand at his right hand, but it does not come nigh him." But let a man once really lose his health and it is a most difficult matter to recover it. His enfeebled condition exposes him to every passing ailment. The mind acts on the body and the body reacts on the mind. Mental ills produce physical, and physical weakness causes mental depression and sadness.

So, again, if a man has a little money there are a hundred ways in which he can invest it and make more. But if a man has no money to begin with it is extremely difficult for him to make any. When one hears of colossal fortunes heaped up by men who began life with nothing one is most interested to learn

how they got the first thousand dollars together, for the history of the first thousand contains the secret of the man's whole subsequent success.

The same thing is true of the intellectual life. If a man knows much it is always easy for him to learn more. Everything contributes to that man's culture. His memory becomes like adamant, from which characters once engraved are never obliterated. His powers of observation are so penetrating that in the very stone which the ignorant man spurns with his foot he can read the history of the world. His brain becomes such a perfect instrument that it works for him while he is asleep. But, on the other hand, if a man knows nothing it is almost impossible to teach him anything and it is equally difficult to make him wish to learn anything.

So we might trace the operation of this great law in a hundred fields. Who is invited to banquets and fine entertainments: the poor man, to whom such an invitation would be quite an event in his life, or the rich man, who is merely bored by it? To whom are all doors open, without money and without price: to the poor man, who otherwise has to remain at home, or to the rich man, who is very well able to pay his own way? If we are thinking of bestowing a gift, to whom do we naturally turn: to some poor distressed man or woman whose necessities it would relieve, or to some one to whom the gift is nothing except a mark of our esteem? It is one of the minor basenesses of human nature that a young man who hesitates at no personal

luxury will quarrel with his washwoman, who depends on him for her living, and carefully examine her accounts lest she should deprive him of a quarter of a dollar. Prosperous men have many friends—at all events, it is their own fault if they have not; poor men have few. Rich men very often have a large circle of family connections who are also rich and who die and leave them their property. The poor man's relative dies and leaves him only the duty of paying for the funeral. Rich men are consulted on every subject, and their advice is followed even in matters of which they know nothing; while, as Juvenal sadly says, "Poverty has no more bitter sting than that it makes a man ridiculous."

Now all these facts make it difficult for a man who is handicapped by ignorance or poverty or ill health to succeed and lead a happy life; unquestionably they bear hard upon him. To overcome and make one's way in spite of them requires manliness, strength of character and courage of the highest order. "To succeed nowadays," says Balzac, "one must be either a miasma or a cannon-ball." So many of us, not caring to be a miasma, but not feeling within our breasts the solid energy of a cannon-ball, either repine and despair or rail against God and Providence for having placed us in such a world. It is hardly necessary to call attention to the wide-spread, rapidly growing discontent of the less-favored classes, revealed by an unusual and appalling number of suicides, by the organization of capital and labor, whose incessant clashes have

assumed the proportions of a social war by elaborate socialistic schemes to evade the hardships of existence, or by the more radical method of the anarchist who hurls his death-dealing bomb against our whole social fabric. At bottom, their quarrel with the world is only with that law of Nature we have been considering—namely, "To him that hath shall be given," not to him that hath need; or, to state the case more broadly but still with perfect fairness, that every one, on the whole, is rewarded in this world according to his social and economic effectiveness, not according to his necessities. It is owing to this law, they say, that life is always a struggle, frequently a disease. Abolish this condition by a more equal distribution of the good things of this world; give to every man at least the opportunity to work out his own salvation, to develop the gift that is in him, and to enjoy the fruit of his labor. Let the rich be satisfied with fortunes they can use and with amusements that really amuse them, and humanity will come to its own again and be as happy and innocent and contented as in the first blessed days of Paradise. There is the great dilemma with which the Christian religion is confronted to-day: on the one hand the dream and vision of Jesus, of the Brotherhood of Man, of a God of Love who desires the happiness and blessedness of all his children; on the other, the growing misery of mankind, the iron law of labor, the sacrifice of the weak which seems to inhere in Nature.

I know very well what the man of science, especially

the evolutionist, will say to this and to every similar attempt to increase the happiness of this world. He will point out that the law which I have been exploiting is by no means peculiar to human society, but that it applies with equal rigor to everything that has life. In every field he shows the tares stubbornly disputing the ground with the good wheat. "Suppose you clergymen," he says, "should leave off considering the lilies of the field that you have considered for nearly two thousand years and consider instead the sharp claws of the tiger or the powerful tail of the alligator, that are certainly formed on very egotistical principles, and ask yourselves the purpose of these ingenious structures." Who has not considered them? We know that he who can strike most sharply and most swiftly will probably get the most prey and leave the largest number of children to inherit his amiable disposition. But what of that? Man has neither the claws of a tiger nor the tail of an alligator. He would be positively embarrassed by such embellishments. Even among those fierce creatures we see the glimmering of a better law that is not the law of battle, but the law of love. All children the world over, the child of the tiger as well as the child of man, are treated not according to their deserts but according to their necessities. Moreover, the evolutionist has fixed his eye exclusively on the most savage and ferocious groups of animals, from which he draws his sweet parables in regard to human life. But apart from the fierce carnivores there is a larger and better group of peaceful herbivorous animals

which have depended not on their individual ferocity and their terrible weapons but on their mildness and gentleness of disposition which has rendered social life and mutual support possible, and it is this group which has flourished best and which alone will survive long after the fierce lions and tigers and crocodiles shall have disappeared. Nor could there be a grosser or more stupid mistake than to suppose that man was brought into this world tamely and miserably to follow the laws of Nature. Rather, he was put here to study those laws and to improve upon them, or, better, to substitute for them moral laws. There is not an evil that men do, not an act of infamy of which the vilest wretch is guilty, that did not spring from some natural desire of his corrupt heart. And, on the other hand, every upward step man has taken has consisted in his overcoming some law of Nature that up to that time had overcome him. Our Christian civilization, so far as it is Christian, is based on a flagrant disobedience of this most fundamental law of Nature. Nature says only the best and strongest shall live. Christianity says all shall live. Not the most miserable child of man shall perish so long as he can be kept alive by the whole wealth of our science and tenderness.

What ought the attitude of Christians to be toward this great problem of human happiness, which is the great question of our day? I have no nostrum, no panacea, to offer, and but little faith in those which have been proposed. Yet the problem of increasing the happiness of the world and of diminishing its misery

is the burden that rests most heavily on all good and tender hearts. Shall we simply close our eyes to the misery of our fellow-men, close our ears to the solemn cry of humanity, and while wrapping ourselves in all the privileges of our order and in all manner of personal indulgence preach resignation and humble submission to the miserable? It is too late for that. That hypocritical doctrine is no longer tolerable. If we have no better message than that we may at least keep silence. Shall we go on artificializing and refining our churches and our services until in them there is no place either for the humble or for the miserable? Shall we go on emasculating our preaching either by fearing to grapple with the great questions of our day—the live devils, as Carlyle called them—or by treating them with the ignorance of children until our very office becomes the laughing-stock of serious men? Our Church has no such intention. Let us not forget that those religions which have conquered for themselves a following and have deeply touched the consciences of men have done so by attacking social evils rather than theological problems. That assuredly was the case with Buddhism. It was not by his atheism or his Nihilistic philosophy, but by his abolition of caste and his equal law of love for all that Sakya Muni drew after him first India, then the greater part of Asia. The proof that Jesus gave of the reality of his Messiahship was that the Gospel for the first time was preached to the poor. It was his glorious conception of the Kingdom of God, in which all good souls were united,

that conquered the Western World for Christianity. Throughout the Middle Ages society was monarchical and aristocratic, but the Church was democratic. The little Church in Jerusalem, in which they that believed had all things in common, was the first practical attempt to abolish the infinite injustice of this world. What if it held together only for a few years? During those years men were happy. Moreover, they set up an ideal that we have been pursuing through the ages. The churches founded by St. Paul in Corinth, Ephesus, and Antioch gave men what the great Roman Empire, with all its magnificence, all its justice, had never given them—a reason for living. Ambrose, the great Bishop of Milan, used to despoil the churches of his diocese and even to sell the sacred vessels of the altar to redeem slaves out of slavery, saying, "My God has no need of cups and platters, but He does desire men to be free and happy." Alas, how long have we esteemed silver and gold in any form to be more precious than the souls and bodies of men! But there is reason to believe that we are returning to better things. The problem of the nineteenth century was to secure to all men equal political rights. That problem has been solved so far as the English-speaking peoples are concerned. Just as certainly the problem of the twentieth century is to secure equal social and human rights. The religion of the future is coming. God forbid that it should come without us! The world is returning to the great moral conceptions of Jesus and the Prophets—the coming of the day of the just, the opening of blind eyes, bringing

prisoners out of their prison-houses. Again it shall be said, "Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of God." The meek at last shall receive their inheritance. The old refrain, "Behold how good and joyful a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," has long ceased to be our chant.

But when our modern individualism and rapacity shall have borne their latest fruit, when humanity, shrunken, saddened, and despoiled, shall return to the great ideals of human brotherhood and human service, when the happiness of the many shall no longer be sacrificed to the vanity and the ambition of a few, then the great fundamental principles of the Christian Religion will regain their value. We shall know why it was that for a man to die in the possession of great and abnormal wealth should have been regarded as a mark of his inferiority. We can understand why Dives lost his soul. We can comprehend how the great orders of the Middle Ages should have spent centuries in discussing whether Jesus so much as owned the clothes he wore. We shall know why he devoted a large portion of his life simply to doing kind acts to the unfortunate. We shall see why it was necessary that the Son of God should not have where to lay his head. The splendid ideal traced by the author of the Acts of the Apostles will be inscribed as a prophetic dream and vision over the gates of the Paradise of humanity: "And the multitude of them that believed were together and had all things common . . . and they continuing daily with one accord in the Temple and breaking bread

from house to house did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of mind, praising God and having favor with all the people." [1]

As one also of your own poets has said:

With gates of silver and bars of gold
Ye have fenced my sheep from their Father's fold.
I have heard the dropping of their tears
In heaven these eighteen hundred years.

O Lord and Master, not ours the guilt,
We build but as our fathers built.
Behold thine images how they stand
Sovereign and sole through all our land.

Then Christ sought out an artisan,
A low-browed, stunted, haggard man,
And a motherless girl whose fingers thin
Pushed from her faintly want and sin.

These set He in the midst of them,
And as they drew back their garments' hem
For fear of defilement—'Lo, here,' said He,
"The images ye have made of Me."

[1] These paragraphs contain a recollection of a great passage of Renan, which I have preferred not to verify.

III

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus: and who is my neighbor?
—St. Luke x: 29.

IN answer to this question Jesus related the parable of the Good Samaritan.

All great masters have their masterpieces. The works of even the greatest artists are not all equal. There are certain canvases of Raphael's, like the Sistine Madonna and the Transfiguration, so glorious as to obscure his other creations. They may not be better painted but they have a greater appeal and a more immediate meaning. So among the sayings of Jesus are two perfect parables which tower like twin pinnacles above his superb edifice. They are the parable of the Prodigal Son and the parable of the Good Samaritan. The Prodigal Son describes the breaking and the renewal of man's relation to God; the Good Samaritan, man's love to his brother. Together they contain the Christian religion. If the Good Samaritan were composed, as it would appear, on the spur of the moment in answer to an unexpected question, it stuns us to think of the resources of the being that uttered it.

A certain lawyer had come to Jesus with a great question, ability to answer which would forever determine the Lord's status as a spiritual teacher: "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus' treatment of this man is very interesting. He does not offer him some little ready-made scheme of salvation. He does not put off his question with a few phrases as to the beauty and power of religion. He causes the man to search his own conscience, and to answer, as far as he can, his own question. "What is written in the Law? How readest thou?" The lawyer's answer shows him to have been a great man. It is a better answer than Hillel made to the man who insisted that the teacher should explain the whole Law to him while he stood on one leg. Hillel said, "What thou wouldest not that another should do to you, do not to him. That is the whole Law, the rest is only comment." When the same request was made to Shammai, Shammai beat the man who asked it with a stick. Hillel's answer omits all allusion to God and is purely negative, and the reply of our lawyer is vastly better: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself."

His answer is so good that it is hard to see how it can be bettered, or why a man who held so noble and complete a view of religion should come to Jesus to inquire the way of salvation. But while Jesus gladly accepted the definition, he did not dismiss the lawyer

as if he had nothing to bestow on him, for there was a most important gift that Jesus intended to give the man who had just given him a noble and refreshing thought. That was to translate his conception from the abstract into the concrete and to put it into action. In religion, as in art, it is the deed, not the word, that counts. The holiest and the truest words cannot become a way of salvation until they are translated into action. The very Word of God is inoperative until it takes flesh.

In answering this question "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus did not trouble himself with the idle query whether it is possible to love another as we love ourselves, but he laid his finger on one of the noblest traits of human nature which he intended to use as a mainspring of his religion. In the Prodigal Son and in many another saying Jesus declared that man's needs and sufferings establish a claim on the love of God entirely irrespective of his deserts and merits. Here he shows how human needs awaken the divine in man by touching his sympathies, and that this great question of the fulfilment of the Law and the attainment of everlasting life has either an immense immediate and practical meaning or it has no meaning.

I suppose and I fear that Jesus aimed a frightful sarcasm at the clergy and the sacerdotal order when he represented the priest and the Levite as calmly going by on the other side, leaving the wounded man bleeding on the ground. But this is perfectly evident: no task and no business in life is important enough or

exacting enough to excuse us from the duty of succoring men and women in distress or from performing those elementary duties of kindness and compassion which are presented to us every day. This is the great commandment of the Law, and it is so great that, if broken, the keeping of the other commandments is of no account. It was not an accident that Jesus selected this disposition as the criterion by which he would recognize his own and as the great principle of judgment which would enable him to separate his sheep from the goats.

No doubt the priest and the Levite had duties to perform, and probably they were religious duties. Very likely the priest was going down to Jericho to preach to the inhabitants of that wicked city on the error of their ways and the Levite was going with him to read the lesson. We instinctively feel that the passing by of the wounded man rendered that service of no account, and we cannot help wondering what the priest preached about that morning—probably a sermon on the discipline and rites of the Church, or on the frame of mind one should be in on the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity. There is a very mischievous little beast called the praying mantis. He looks very devout, a very paragon of insects for piety. His arms are ever folded, and his head bowed as if in prayer; but let another insect trust these appearances to approach him, and he becomes a specter to affright, and his revenge is like the tiger's spring. There are many praying mantises in the world. Some

assume that posture to leap upon their prey. Others are so sunk in their reverie that they perceive not when men are perishing.

Next let us observe how thoroughly the Good Samaritan did his work. He undertook only one case, but he carried it through to the end. The wounded man was no professional beggar like those whose hands are outstretched on every street and who can never be restored to manhood by alms but only by re-education. He was not one of those scheming marauders who gently pull our bells after dark and who pour into our astonished ears tales equal in invention to Baron Munchausen's. He was a man like ourselves who had met with sudden misfortune and who needed both surgical treatment and social service. This the Good Samaritan saw at a glance, and he trusted the instinct of his own noble heart. He did not stop to inquire whether religion is for the sick or only for the well. He did not call in a scientific society to make an investigation of his patient's past history while the man was bleeding to death. He cleansed and bound up his wounds, employing the best antiseptics at his command. He placed the wounded man on his own beast and carried him to the inn, and when he had put his patient to bed he paid for his maintenance. Nor did he allow the case to lapse through inattention and neglect, but he bound himself to care for the man until his health was restored. There was only one thing he omitted—the pursuit and arrest of the miscreants who had perpetrated the outrage, that others

might not suffer at their hands, which is always a very difficult task. But in every other respect he stands as a model to every man or association of men that would serve humanity to-day.

There is no doubt that Jesus regarded such a disposition as this as of the very essence of religion, and that without it the other half of the Law, which is duty to God, becomes impossible. God is in no need of our services. There is no service we can render to Him but the service of a willing mind, and no gift that we can bestow upon the Most High except the offering of a contrite heart and the relief of His needy creatures.

Perhaps there never was a time when men needed to heed this parable of Christ's more than now. We seem to think that great evils can be remedied merely by talking about them. We form societies and hold meetings and pass resolutions and offer petitions and take measures. There is everlasting talk about reform which no one seems willing to begin with himself. The voices die away, the crowds are dispersed, the words are forgotten, and everything remains exactly as it was before. And we imagine that this can take the place of deeds, and we even fancy that because we are interested in these things and are busy about them we have no time to do good.

Jesus, however, it would seem, placed little reliance on all this. When he sent out his Disciples he did not say: "Talk, agitate questions, hold meetings," but, "Heal the sick, cast out devils, Freely ye have re-

ceived, freely give." He spent a large part of his life in the quiet performance of kind acts, and he assumed that a large part of his Disciples' lives would be spent in doing good in secret. Some words are good, but in this sphere the only words that are heeded much are the words of a man of action. The last judgment passed on us here and hereafter is on our goodness of heart.

We like to think of Henry Ward Beecher sitting in his great church at night after the services of the day are over, with his arms around two little street Arabs who had wandered in to listen to the music and who had fallen asleep. We like to think of Abraham Lincoln laying aside his crushing cares to write a letter of sympathy to a bereaved mother in words of such exquisite beauty that the University of Oxford could find no more perfect specimen of language to engrave in letters of gold upon its portal for the instruction of successive generations of English scholars. It gives us more pleasure to remember Phillips Brooks in the homes of the poor, tending the baby while its tired mother takes a walk, than to think of him preaching in Westminster Abbey. One harsh or graceless act on the part of such men would mar the ideal image of them we carry in our hearts.

The problem presented to us by the need and suffering and distress of a great city, I admit, is very difficult. It is a hundred times as difficult as it was in Judea in the days of Jesus. If our fallen brothers would only act as reasonably as the man in the parable, if they

would go with us to the inn and get well and go back to an honest and a peaceable life, it would give us nothing but pleasure to help them. But that is just what the majority of them will not do. We relieve their necessities, we dress their wounds, we cheerfully pay the twopence for their support, but the next time we go their way there they are as hungry and naked and wounded as ever, and fortunate are we if they do not reverse the rôle and rob us and leave us half dead at their ingratitude.

I often think of the strange persons who have come to me in the course of my ministry, of the criminals I have failed to reform, of the weird and terrible tales I have listened to, and I wonder sometimes if, until ten years ago when I found a better method, I did any perceptible good. Twice I have tried Victor Hugo's experiment of taking friendless strangers into my home. One of those persons went to jail; the other richly deserved to go there. But I am convinced that when I have failed to change and improve such persons I failed, not because I gave them too much, but because I had too little to give them. The mortal challenge of their depravity was beyond my strength. Their incredulity and unbelief were greater than my faith. What I regret is not that I gave such men so much, but that I did not give them more. If I have done little for them, they have done much for me, and I am devoutly thankful that the great confraternity of the miserable still regards the Church as its only natural friend.

It is true, each one of us can do but little and the need is endless. Our means seem as inadequate as those of the Disciples when after anxious search they came to Jesus and said, "There is a lad here that hath five barley loaves and a few small fishes, but what are they among so many?" And yet, however the miracle was wrought, with that scanty supply Jesus satisfied all. Preposterous as it sounds to unbelief, this same Jesus, this man that had not where to lay his head, is the chief hope of the hungry, thirsty, sinning, suffering multitudes that throng us to-day. If his followers would act in his spirit, if our society were organized to realize his ideals, if those whom life has robbed and wounded could be brought to him, the worst evils that deform human nature and that destroy human life would disappear.

We are accustomed to ascribe the wonderful progress of the past century chiefly to reason. But the progress we have most reason to be proud of—the emancipation of the slave, sensitiveness to pain, cruelty, and injustice, love of humanity—has been effected by the spirit of Jesus Christ, not by reason. It was not reason that plunged this country into civil war fifty years ago, and that induced us to make the greatest sacrifice man has ever made for men. Reason, speaking by the mouth of Aristotle, had laid down as an axiom that the inferior races are designed by Nature to be the slaves of the superior races. The emancipation of the slave was effected when slavery was clearly seen to be against the will and the religion of Jesus Christ; and

when the next great emancipation of men from want and ignorance and crime shall take place it will take place by the same means. Sociologists may prescribe, anarchists may plot, socialists may scheme, but power to lift the world to new courses comes from religion.

I know that there are still many persons who call themselves Christians who prize the good things of life —wealth, position, education, culture—chiefly because other persons cannot enjoy them. Their aim in life is to exclude, to be exclusive. They make their culture, their social rank, even their religion, a thing which separates them from the rest of humanity, rather than a thing which binds them to it. That culture is a spurious culture, that religion a false religion, no matter in what terms they express it. To me it is a source of profound unhappiness that all persons cannot share in what God has given me to enjoy. My religion means more to me than it meant before when I can induce another man to accept it. With every new believer the faith of all becomes stronger. When religion bestows the greatest blessings it is most loved. The truths which illumine my own life shine with tenfold brightness when I see other men walking in their light. It is only when truths are broadly disseminated and generally accepted that they become great and useful, and it is for this that all noble minds labor. If a hundred men light their torches at my torch the world is so much brighter, and my torch does not burn more dimly. The time will come when a better generation of men will look back to us with surprise.

They will regard our luxury, our ostentation, the splendor of our private life as proofs of our barbarity because it coexisted with and was untouched by so much misery. When I see men and women fighting the bitter battle with poverty and want my heart bleeds for them, but I pity them more for their ignorance and moral blindness than I do for their poverty. The saddest thought to me is that men must live like brutes, blind and ignorant, never knowing those truths which make life a blessing.

When Jesus finished this glorious parable he said, "Go, and do thou likewise." Why should we not do this? Is there any field in the world better worth cultivating than human happiness? Does any plant or tree bear better fruit than the gratitude of the human heart? Can we dig more precious treasures out of the earth than we discover in human nature? Why should we think that the character, the health, the happiness and salvation of the humblest, lowest person is beneath our dignity or beyond our power? Happiness is not for one, it is not for two, nor for a few, nor for many, but for all. Only the happiness of the whole world can satisfy us. Therefore in this world we can never really be happy because we see so many that are unhappy. God alone knows the way to happiness, and He is happy only because He is leading us to it.

IV

JESUS' JUDGMENT OF MEN

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

St. Matthew xxv: 31–33.

BELIEF in a judgment to come is one of the oldest and the justest ideas which have taken possession of the mind of man. The first principle of every moral religion is: God is just. But when thoughtful men in every age have observed life as it is, what has scandalized them most is its injustice. They have seen the violence of the tryant, and they have heard the unanswered prayer of the oppressed. They have seen the crafty sinner growing old and rich and honorable. Like Ecclesiastes, they have witnessed the funerals of criminals celebrated in the very cities in which they did their worst deeds, while the righteous seek their bread out of desolate places. The hope of a nation or the stay and glory of a family is stricken down, while the spoiler of his country grows and prospers, and the man whose life is but a burden to himself and a mortification to his friends Death seems to forget altogether.

Spectacles such as these have naturally given rise to sad misgivings in religious minds. The course of this world seems to be such a violation of moral order and justice that religious men have felt themselves bound to maintain that the world as it exists is not the perfect expression of the will of God, but that God reserves to Himself the final judgment of all human actions. That this is not an absurd idea is proved by the single fact that Immanuel Kant was willing to stake his hope of immortality, and even his faith in God, on the consideration that there must be reparation in eternity for the injustices of time. As to the nature of this judgment, different nations and different ages have represented it according to their conception of what is most worthy of God. "Did you think that we created you for fun," Allah asks, in the Koran, "or that you should not appear before us?" And again: "We will establish the scales of equity at the Resurrection, and no soul shall be wronged even of the weight of a mustard-seed. We will repay and we are sufficient as accountants." However their ideas of justice vary, and however bold the flights of their poetic fancy, all serious religions of mankind have proclaimed with one voice, "It is appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment."

It is therefore a matter of great importance to Christians that Jesus Christ gave this ancient belief the sanction of his authority, and that he has drawn for us his matchless pictures of the Last Day. In this saying Jesus gives us his judgment of human life. Did Jesus

intend this solemn description as a parable or as a warning of what is actually coming? Unless we are sure it is a parable it would be wise to act as if it were literally true. In this great narrative he tells us that he himself will be our judge. Sincere believers will find nothing strange in this. They will rather rejoice that he who has borne our flesh and felt its temptations is to judge us. We may even reverently say that no one who does not know all the strangeness of human life from experience is fitted to pass a final judgment on it. And yet I would prefer that no one turn away from this thought with a smile as if it were a mere innocent piece of Christian mythology we were discussing. It is not easy to escape the judgment of Christ. If he has no other right over us he has the right of the Master to judge the work of a beginner. Until we attain the flawless perfection of his character, and our soul is great enough to embrace a world in love, and our life is pure enough, wonderful enough to serve as the embodied ideal of virtue to millions of human beings, Christ will continue to judge us. Auguste Comte once complained to a friend of the failure of his Religion of Humanity to supersede Christianity, and his friend replied: "Auguste, you have not taken the right method. If you wish to supersede Jesus Christ, the proper course for you to take is to be crucified and then rise from the dead on the third day."

Turning now to the principles by which Jesus declares he will judge men, the two things which impress us most are his wonderful generosity and his

perfect morality. In these respects his disposition is so noble, so free, so indifferent to all secondary considerations, and so terribly in earnest in his insistence on the one thing needful that this statement has never become popular. In the light of this great saying of Jesus, so many of the things we consider great become so small, or totally disappear, that the Church has been afraid to accept it literally or to teach it to her children. Even to this day when we read these words with open eyes their boldness takes our breath away. Jesus, for example, says no word about beliefs or observances, about baptism or church-membership. Stranger than that, he does not ask the souls arrayed before him in regard to their disposition toward himself, whether they accepted him or rejected him, acknowledged him or denied him. He does not ask how we treated him, but only how we treated one another. And it is perfectly plain that some at least of those saved and blessed persons whom he welcomes to his Kingdom do not pretend that they have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and visited the sick for the sake of Jesus. Honest and good people, they tell him to his face that they had not discerned him in that hungry, thirsty, naked humanity for whom they had done what they could. What does he say then? "Nay, but ye did it in my spirit, therefore ye are mine." That would have been generous and touching, but what he says is more generous and touching: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me." Every member of that humanity I love so much

that he who has fed and clad and visited it in its distress has fed and clad and visited me, and here, before men and angels, I acknowledge my debt to him and throw round him the arms of my protecting love. If that is not generosity, if that is not pure disinterested love, it would be difficult to say where love or generosity has ever expressed itself on this earth.

Moreover, the judgment of Jesus is terribly moral. There are a great many ideas which men have entertained in regard to the judgment of God which are not moral at all, but they find no place here. It would not be moral for God to condemn men because of their belief and opinions, for these are usually formed by influences over which we have little control, and, besides, every honorable man believes and thinks what he considers true. It would not be moral for God to reject men because in His Providence He had caused them to live at a time or in a place in which it was impossible for them to know of Christ. It would not be moral for God either to save men or to damn them out of mere caprice or indifference without regard to their merit or demerit, according to an extreme form of the doctrine of Predestination. Among the traditions related of Mohammed we read that when God made the human race He took an enormous lump of clay out of which all mankind was to be formed, and in which, in a manner, it pre-existed. Having divided the clod into two parts, He turned one half into hell, crying out, as He did so, "These to hell fire and I care not." The other part He projected into heaven, exclaiming, "And these to

heaven and I care not." As far as the story ascribes to God brutal disregard of human happiness or misery it misrepresents the mind of Mohammed, but it is hardly worse than much that has palmed itself off as Christian theology. But how different all this is from the noble seriousness of Christ. He has no great book in which the names of the elect were enrolled ages before they were born. He does not ask where we were born or what we professed, but what we did, and in asking this question he does not demand unusual and difficult deeds which lie in the power of few, but those simple acts of humanity and loving service which we may perform every day, and which, we may say, Nature herself teaches. Plainly, this is one of the fundamental sayings of Jesus which goes to the root of his conception of life and of religion.

Yet in our admiration for the magnanimity of Jesus, which is seldom recognized as it should be, let us not miss one of the most important points of the great saying. In his account of the Judgment he asks but one question, but he asks that with terrible earnestness. If he said "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom," he also said, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," and when we come to this part of the strange story and ask why the Lover of men pronounced this terrible malediction on them it becomes stranger still. For the men whom Jesus condemns and from whom he shudderingly withdraws himself he does not accuse of any crimes. He does not say "Depart, ye rebels, ye blasphemers, ye thieves and

adulterers." The only accusation he brings against them is not for what they have done, but for what they have left undone. They are those who have stood aside from the struggle, who contributed nothing to the cause of humanity—those human worms who gnaw their way through life consuming all and leaving only a train of corruption in their path. "For I was ahungered, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." Then their surprise is just as genuine as the surprise of the saved. They were not conscious of having neglected any important and obvious duties. They had not deliberately turned their backs on Jesus. Their answering question comes back as full of curiosity as it is full of agony: "Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst, or naked, or a stranger, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" And still the only accusation Jesus makes is, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

Now I believe that the impression which this story makes on those who consider it without preconceived ideas is a peculiar one. If, for example, it was not contained in our Bible, but had been recently discovered written on some old Egyptian papyrus and its authenticity were admitted, it might give us a decidedly new conception of Christianity. We may have considered as paramount among our Christian duties the necessity of right belief, keeping ourselves respect-

able, care in the observance of certain ordinances, and avoiding the injury of others. And yet, according to the solemn declaration of Jesus, we may go on doing these things all our lives only to hear him say at last, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," and no doubt we should be just as much surprised as those who called him "Lord" and asked, "When saw we thee?" etc.

And yet, perhaps, one should not push such a saying as this too far. If it is not a parable intended to teach one powerful and touching lesson, it is at most a bold and rapid sketch from which much must necessarily be omitted. Making, then, these necessary deductions, the two great facts still remain as firm as ever. So far as the weakness of human nature is concerned, Christ's judgment is very lenient, but in regard to our moral disposition toward our fellow-men it is very severe.

To judge man's conduct by a standard of abstract and perfect righteousness and to make his eternal doom depend upon his ability to withstand such an ordeal would be both futile and cruel. Judged by such a standard, every human being save one who ever drew the breath of life would be condemned. Nothing is more certain than that human nature is imperfect and full of sin, and those persons who look for perfection either in themselves or in their friends are grossly and damnably deceived. But, on the other hand, man possesses great possibilities of improvement. Whether we consider what individual men favored by nature and circumstances have made themselves, or whether we

look at the history of the race on this planet and perceive that this spiritualizing, uplifting process, far from exhausting itself, gathers strength and acts with greater power as time passes, it is hard to believe that God will place a final barrier in the way of any human soul which by God's patience and by His fostering care might succeed at last in eradicating its evil and in attaining the degree of perfection of which its nature is capable. And yet Christ's rejection of those who have stood apart from the struggle, who have fed no hungry, clothed no naked, and visited no sick, is comprehensible when we remember that the very condition of this vast and splendid upward march of humanity is sacrifice. Without sacrifice progress—that is to say, final salvation—is impossible. It is the willing sacrifice of father and mother that makes the home. It is the sacrifice of the good that reclaims the evil. It is the sacrifice of the well that heals the sick. It is the life-long sacrifice of great men that gives us science, art, and literature. It is the sacrifice of those who have something which makes life possible to those who have nothing. As long as this sentiment of unselfish service is free and strong, life is sound and happy. The weak are protected, the ignorant are taught, home is sacred and blessed, the arts and sciences flourish, noble characters are formed, and the state, guarded by the virtue and devotion of her citizens, is as strong as steel. In short, all those energies are at work which advance humanity both individually and collectively.

But when in any country religion, which is the fruitful cause of this miracle, begins to lose its power over the minds of the multitude, when the ideals of Jesus Christ are obscured and forgotten, when sacrifice is supplanted by egotism and self-indulgence, a very singular change takes place. Men, losing the infinite hope with which Jesus had inspired them, and having become skeptical and selfish, are no longer capable of anything great. They value their unhappy lives so much that they will not sacrifice them for anything. Society, no longer banded together by high ideals, becomes corrupt. The state, no longer protected by the valor of its citizens, becomes an easy prey. A swarm of egotisms begins to pick to pieces the fabric which devotion once reared. In short, all those disintegrating influences are at work which annihilate progress and which, if unrestricted, would reduce man to his primitive condition of individual rapacity. The conduct which Jesus condemns is that which would render real salvation impossible.

There is one other very strange touch in this saying of Christ: the surprise of the saved and the lost when they first saw themselves as they were. Perhaps this is the reason. Only in death does a man see what he has done for others and what others have done for him, what spiritual treasures he has accumulated during life and what use he has made of these treasures. In this world we never really see ourselves or know ourselves. Only that portion of our soul on which consciousness sheds its narrow beam is visible; while all around the

great dewy fields are wrapped in darkness, this or that chamber of the soul's mansion is momentarily bright. Then again it is wrapped in obscurity. So man lives, a stranger to himself, forgetful often of his greatest treasures. But in the moment of death, when eternal night closes forever the eye of flesh, a mysterious dawn begins to lighten over the whole soul, and all that was forgotten returns, not as here, by the painfully seeking and piecing together the fragments of consciousness, but with one glance clear and comprehensive as an eagle's we shall see the forgotten facts of life and life as a whole. To many that sight will be glorious, yet probably no one will see himself without shame.

Christ's advice to us, then, is that we keep our hearts pure and also that we keep them warm. If you wish Jesus to receive you kindly at the Judgment, receive him kindly when, poor and faint and sick and discouraged, he knocks at your door, remembering that you will yet knock at his door. "Saved thyself, save others. Having gained the farther shore, bring others over. Redeemed thyself, redeem. Having found peace, make peace." (Gautama Buddha.)

V

IDEALISM AND DEVOTION

And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.—Exodus xxxii:19.

MOSES had just come down from the Mount. For forty days and forty nights he had stood upon the awful heights of Sinai, alone with God and with his own conscience. This mount of itself is one of the most singular objects on the face of the globe. Formed entirely of pink granite, which the sun has bathed for centuries without penetrating, it is the exact likeness of a world without water, like the moon. At times the atmosphere is so clear that there seems to be no atmosphere. Again, dark and terrible clouds of vapor gather about its summits, and storms crash down its sides, producing a kind of metallic concert, composed of the tones of the drum, the cannon, the trumpet, and the bell. But storms, elsewhere beneficent, are here simply destructive. Of all that constitutes nature—plants, animals, men—here is nothing but stone, crushing life and annihilating every attempt at cultivation.[1]

Primitive man has always lodged his gods upon

[1] Rénan.

mountains of eternal snow. Those untrodden heights so full of mystery, those dizzy walls of eagle-baffling rock, far from all possible contamination, appeared to be the most suitable home for the Deity. There he can be in the world and yet not of the world. So from the most hoary antiquity this Mount Sinai had spread terror far and wide. It was always called the Mount of Elohim, the Mount of God. It was this mount that Moses climbed. Upon those shining heights, limpid as crystal or dark and gloomy with thick enveloping clouds, he stood face to face with Nature in its most overpowering mood and with Nature's God. What thoughts took possession of his lonely heart as he saw the sun, bathing the western heavens in gorgeous colors, drop behind Egypt, the land of his people's captivity? Or, as he looked out at night from the cleft of the rocks at the storm hurrying by and saw the dark clouds suddenly open to reveal the glory of God, the sharp, vivid, intolerable lightning, and felt the solid frame of the mountain jar and tremble beneath the crashing thunder, re-echoed from peak to peak until at last it died away into absolute silence—what emotions then filled his soul? Did he feel himself crushed and annihilated by the immensity of Nature? In the presence of these wild and devastating forces did he feel the utter insignificance of man? Could he associate this infinite Deity, riding upon the heavens as upon a horse, with the small voice that spoke to him out of the Burning Bush, with the God that had chosen Israel and that loves men? Fateful moment when man, lifted far

above the petty objects of his daily striving, finds himself alone, face to face with the immensity of Nature, so empty or so full of God according to the depth of his spirituality!

What will he make of it? Will he divine the secret of this marvelous scene? As the stars break out and spangle the black vault of heaven, will he read his own infinite destiny in the infinite skies? Will he tear the veil from Nature and discover even the hinder parts of the Deity? or will he look within his own heart and discover within himself a principle superior to mere immensity and power? Will he hear in the earnest cry of the creature for purity and enlightenment a voice more solemn than the rolling thunder or the rattling hail? Will he dare, once for all, to utter the grand affirmation that the God whom man in his better moments adores must be good? Michael Angelo has not made his colossal statue of Moses a whit too large. Difficult as it is, after the lapse of thousands of years, to picture to ourselves such personalities as his, the mere fact that certain human beings tower so astonishingly above their fellows convinces us that in life they were giants. The man who amid the thunders of Sinai distinguished the Ten Words of the Law, the man who tore from Nature, or, as we ought to say, received from God those eternal sanctions of the moral life to which the whole world has been converted, those bulwarks of humanity within which it is safe, without which it perishes, deserves the halo with which history has surrounded his head.

But now Moses has had his vision, and he must come down. In this world it is not given man to stand long face to face with the Infinite. He is too weak a creature, or perhaps it is because there are so many others who can see God only in some inspired face, to whom the vision must be carried ere it fades. So Moses descends, bearing the two tables of the Law in his hands. Can we wonder that his face shone? How his heart must have throbbed and bounded with joy as he thought of the value of the gift he was bringing to his people. He has fought the battle alone, and the most distant generations of men shall reap the fruits of his victory. He has proclaimed the Law that the last dawn of reckoning shall read.

Alas, what a disillusion was in store for him! As he drew near the camp he heard the cries of the people shouting as if for war as they prostrated themselves naked in their wanton dance around the golden calf, crying at the top of their voices, "This is thy God, O Israel, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt. As for this Moses, we know not what has become of him." But the next moment they knew, for there, with blazing eye, his countenance still shining with the glory of the Lord, the giant stood, bearing in his hands the priceless message of the God they had already rejected and forsaken. As when the moving finger arrested the laughter of Belshazzar's harlots, as death sometimes surprises us in the midst of the splendors of life, as a man warned by certain recollections in the midst of his debauchery suddenly becomes thoughtful and begins to

examine himself,—the dance ceased, the naked ones perceived that they were naked, Aaron came forward with his pitiful excuses, and the people stood trembling, awaiting the result. The next instant Moses' wrath, till then pent up with difficulty, blazed forth. It was then, I suspect, that he spake unadvisedly with his lips and lost the Promised Land. How can such a people as this comprehend the holy vision he has seen upon the Mount? Of what use is it to them in the solemn name of Duty to deliver to them the pure commandments of morality? Let them worship the "golden calf." It is all they are fit for. So he raised the two tables and dashed them to pieces on the rocks. Then the sight of his broken and ruined ideals recalled him in a measure to himself. He discovered that the people were not so dead to God as he supposed, and after a while he set about restoring the commandments of God that he himself had destroyed.

That second sojourn on the Mount must have been very different from the first. It lacked the enthusiasm, the fresh delight of the first vision. He is not now face to face with God wrestling for new truth. He has but to restore what God formerly revealed to him; yet we may believe that in a certain sense the revelation means more to him now than it meant before. Must not even this terrible experience have taught Moses to feel man's need of a holy God more deeply than he had felt it before? Once his heart had been filled only with the sense of God: now it is filled with God and a deeper sympathy for erring, sinful humanity. On the one side is God,

longing to reveal Himself, and on the other man, who needs so much to receive that revelation. The vision has come in contact with reality, and, though by that contact it seems to have been shattered, only the letter has perished; the spirit has gained fresh strength. The first battle was lost, or, rather, Moses thought it was lost because it was not won in a day; but a second battle began that is going on still. I cannot doubt that this was a turning-point in Moses' life. Henceforth we see this fiery Moses enduring the contradictions of sinners with infinite patience and sweetness, and with that divine charity which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. To receive the truth from God, to inscribe it upon stone and give it to the people, is truly a great thing. But to make this truth loved, to write it legibly and indelibly upon the hearts of men, is incomparably harder and greater. If Moses had stopped short with breaking the commandments in pieces he would have deserved to rank with those idealists whose dreams dissolve at the terrible touch of reality. Because he had the courage to restore what his hands had destroyed, to rescue his broken vision, to clothe it anew and inscribe it in the heart of humanity, he is one of those few men to whom it is given perceptibly to advance the cause of goodness in this world.

This story represents a common experience of life. No one haunted by high hopes and generous purposes escapes it altogether. On the one side there is the vision, the pure and holy truth God has revealed to our souls,

and on the other there are the men and women for whose sakes that truth was given. Our souls are so full of the vision we think we have but to point it out to others and they will see it; we love it so much that it seems to us impossible that they should not love it too. So we come down from the mountain, our faces shining, our hearts beating, bearing the new commandment, the revelation that is to change all things, and suddenly we come face to face with the multitude. We announce our message; they are quite indifferent. We make the great revelation: they do not tremble, they are not aroused to action, they are not even interested; the more vehement we grow, the more they smile. Here is precisely the point at which every effort to improve man is either shattered or gains its first strength. What shall we do? Shall we give it all up? Shall we dash our holy revelation to the earth and retire broken-hearted and humiliated to watch the crowd whirling around their golden calf? If so, shall we ever have strength to take up our divine burden again and rewrite our message in the light of the lives of those men and women for whom it is intended, to throw into our task the new element of devotion, to suffer, to be patient, to love men at least as much as we love truth, and to be thankful at last for a small and partial victory instead of the instantaneous and complete triumph for which we had hoped?

A man becomes impressed with the injustice and inequalities of our present social life. It seems strange to him that with so much work to be done, so large a

proportion of our laboring population should find it impossible to get work; that with grain and cattle enough to feed the world men and women should die of hunger; that with our inexhaustible coal-fields and forests the children of the poor should freeze; that with wool and cotton enough to clothe this planet they should go naked. Such a state of things, he says, is both wrong and ridiculous. It cannot be the will of our Heavenly Father that a few should have a superfluity they cannot use, while to the vast majority life is a joyless struggle followed by a still more joyless old age. "What doth it avail this Prometheus to have stolen fire from heaven, to have mastered all the forces of Nature, to have invented every form of labor-saving machine, if the vulture Poverty is forever to tear his entrails?" So he sets himself to work to study the conditions of this inequality, and at last he comes forward with a program, a plan, which, if it could be carried out, would create a heaven on earth. What is the result? Absolutely none. The people are too busy dancing around their golden calf to pay the least attention to him. The rich, whom he calls to sacrifice their possessions, curse him. The poor, to whom he promises Paradise, mock him. It makes no difference if the system he proposes be as wise as the Ten Words of Moses: no one will have anything to do with it. So in wrath he casts it from him and surrenders the people to the sufferings they seem to him so richly to deserve. But now, if he really loves humanity, the time will come when he takes up his broken tablets again and sets about writing them in

the hearts of a very few persons. If men will not listen to his words they may be touched by his deeds. Perhaps he goes down to one of the dark places of the earth, and there, according to his strength, he reproduces the life of Jesus, the life of absolute unselfishness; and now people begin to listen to him and look to him. He will not accomplish anything great. He will not succeed in inaugurating the day of the just. But he will diminish a little the infinite sorrow of the world; he will dry up some pools of this ocean of tears; he will set his faithful mark on his generation; he will add his quota to the sum of human goodness and happiness.

To a woman comes the great romance of life in the pure passion of love idealized. Little by little she feels the old personal, individual life, with its narrow limitations, its sense of "mine" and "thine" slipping away as she enters that world of infinite desires and hopes which opens once in our lives to receive us all. Instructed only by the innocence of her heart, she imagines that those radiant dreams constitute the whole of life. As Emerson says of Guy: "How high, how aristocratic, how Roman his mien and manners! To live with him were life indeed!" Alas! God alone never disappoints us. Love, to be perfect, must avoid the soiling contact of reality. To Petrarch, Laura was a dream. Dante saw Beatrice for the last time when she was twelve years old. As for Guy, he is decidedly mundane. His noble air conceals an empty head or a cold heart. His history did not begin on the great day of that first meeting. He has debts; he takes snuff;

in short, he is a man. And with that discovery the heavens grow black, "shades of the prison-house begin to fall." So begins that struggle that seems to superficial eyes the struggle between husband and wife, but is in reality the heroic effort of love to save its possessions, to preserve its divine illusions, amid the general wreck of its ideals. Compromise! A secondary happiness! Ah me, how ardent souls revolt against those cruel words! And yet for most men and women that is life — a compromise between rapture and despair, a fraction of varying value, of which what we have is the numerator, what we desire, the denominator. Happiness, especially first happiness, on which the whole of life sometimes hangs, is a plant of tender growth. Like certain sensitive plants, it withers at the first unkind touch. Alas, how often, in our blind folly, we uproot the plant that, encouraged to grow, would have sheltered us our whole lives long, in whose branches the birds of heaven would have made their nests and sung to us! And yet even that uprooted plant, replaced in the soil of the heart, watered by tears and tended by affection, has been known to grow again. Devotion rebuilds the house that disillusion or ignorance has torn down.

> Of her two fights with the beryl stone,
> Lost the first, but the second won.

So in all life are those two principles, idealism and devotion. They alone make life worth living; but the first is helpless without the second, and the second is

blind without the first. Of their fruitful marriage all great things are born, but each is barren without the other. (That is the foolishness of most of our preaching. It may sometimes alter opinions, but how often it affects conduct we dare not inquire.) The vision must come down to earth and bravely grapple with human affairs, or it is nothing. In that contact with reality it is usually shattered. Then devotion gathers up those broken fragments, pieces them together, and rewrites its message on a substance harder and more imperishable than stone—the human heart. To be able to do this, to retain our faith in our ideals when broken and trodden beneath men's feet in the dust, to know how to lay aside our inward sadness, to dismiss our enervating doubts and struggle on, to continue our march, sustained only by the thought of duty and an unyielding will, to make the most of life as it is given to us—that is the supreme test of all great souls. That is the real victory of faith that overcometh the world.

VI

FORTY YEARS OF AGNOSTICISM

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.—St. John's Gospel xvii: 3.

A GENERATION ago Christianity was staggering under what appeared to be one of the most deadly blows it had ever received. It was the attack epitomized in the word "agnosticism."[1] Professor Huxley, the author of the word, declared that agnosticism is to theology what death is to life, the last stage of its evolution, which is dissolution. Forty years have passed, a sufficiently long time for an idea to sink into the minds of men, and we see them as much preoccupied with the old spiritual ideals as ever. And yet things are not exactly as they were. Much of the criticism of agnosticism was just and merited. It has caused us to look to our foundations and to recognize a large element of agnosticism in Christ. It has made religion less rationalistic and more spiritual. But the bitterness of the attack has

[1] This expression was invented by Huxley in 1869 to express the attitude of mind of those who hold that we can have scientific or real knowledge only of phenomena, and that such conceptions as God and immortality, lying, as he believed, beyond the range of experience, can neither be proved nor disproved, and that therefore they should neither be denied nor affirmed.

passed, and the complete revolution of human aims and efforts which was expected to spring from the scientific movement of the latter half of the nineteenth century has failed to take place. Thankful as we are for the progress of science, we no longer make a religion or a fetish of it. We know better than our predecessors knew both what science can do for us and what it cannot do.

What has taken the sting out of agnosticism is recognition of the fact that we are disposed toward the soul exactly as we are disposed toward God. Apart from self-consciousness we know one just as little as we know the other. God and the soul belong together. He who believes in one believes in the other, and for precisely the same reasons, and he who denies the one denies the other. We look into the face of a friend and we see something. Not without reason is the face called the mirror of the soul. But do we see all? Much is too deep, much too subtle, much too hidden for our glance to penetrate. We look into the face of Nature and we see more, but here also much is too deep, much is too high, too complex, too difficult for us to grasp. Yet as the face reveals the soul, so Nature reveals God, by thought, by sympathy, by intuition, not by mechanical processes. And as spirit speaks to spirit, so God speaks to our hearts. Huxley's chief defect was that he wished to make the methods of physics the sole criterion of all human experience.

In this sense most thoughtful men are now agnostic,

yet this discovery has not caused us to love our friends the less nor to change our attitude to them. Neither has it caused us to love God less, but it has led us to depend more on the intuitive powers of the soul and less on mere speculations. Agnosticism, in accomplishing this, has given a death-blow to dogmatism. We no longer believe ourselves to be in such exclusive possession of truth that we regard all who differ from us as culpable or demented. The old dogmatic sermons which from a text or a mere idea proceeded to construct heaven and earth and to fathom the inmost recesses of God's being are no longer preached, not merely because congregations can no longer be induced to listen to them, but because preachers of talent can no longer be found to preach them. The defect of much of the older theology is its unreality. It was learned enough and logical enough, but it corresponded to little either in Nature or in human life. Setting out from no verifiable hypothesis and adding thought to thought, as a spider spins her web out of her own entrails, it touched reality at few points. What we desire is not to know so much about God as to know God. In arguments of this kind it is as easy to prove one side as it is the other, provided one is logical and does not contradict oneself. In these battles of words he wins the victory who thinks that he has won it.

> The first is so, the second so,
> Therefore the third and fourth are so,
> And if the first had not been seen
> The third and fourth had never been.

This much, then, we may willingly concede. There is a knowledge of God, entirely speculative, which turns out to be no knowledge at all, because it does not correspond to any known or felt reality. For this conception we are not indebted to Professor Huxley. In philosophy he had been preceded by Kant and Hume. In religion Buddha had perceived this fact as clearly as Huxley perceived it. Confucius was a conscious agnostic. Jesus was most guarded in all his utterances as to God. He sought God through the heart and the will, and in all his authentic teaching there is not one speculative opinion or an argument as to God's being and nature. Isaiah affirmed: "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself." "My ways are not as your ways." Job ironically inquired: "Canst thou by searching find out God, canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? He is higher than Heaven. What canst thou know? deeper than hell, what canst thou do?" And Ecclesiastes, exceeding them all, declared, "Thou hast set eternity in their hearts, thou hast unrolled the world before their eyes, but in such a manner that from the beginning to the end they can know nothing about it." If there were anything fatal to true and spiritual religion in such a conception, we may be sure that such men as these would not have embraced it.

It might seem, then, a very simple matter, as Herbert Spencer thought, to patch up a truce, and to effect a reconciliation between religion and science on this very basis, on the ground that religion is altogether a matter

of faith and science altogether a matter of knowledge, and that their aims and scope are therefore mutually exclusive. This is the common refuge of superficial minds, but to thoughtful religious minds such a reconciliation is inadequate, because science also has its faith and religion has its knowledge. The buried foundations of things on which all science rests are always matters of faith, not of knowledge. Even logic and mathematics are unable to prove their own first principles, but are obliged to appeal to an inner sense in man to which religion also appeals. Moreover, though faith outstrips knowledge and experience, it sets out from them, and, on the whole, the larger number of facts faith can find to rest on, the stronger and the happier it is. Faith without knowledge is pure superstition. It is not possible to split up human nature in this manner and to divide the soul into water-tight compartments, and if we should succeed in doing so we should only deform it and cripple it. We are suffering too much from dissociation already. If we would avoid a graver mental disease we must find some way to unify and harmonize our higher faculties.

The very question, "Do we know anything of God?" marks a great advance over the eighteenth century. Then the question was not, "What do we know of God?" but, "Is there a God? Does any unifying spiritual power exist?" This question is now seldom asked, almost never by educated persons. The tacit assumption of the existence of God on the part of almost all thinking men marks an immense progress.

But this is not all. Science also has its creed, its supreme religious confession of faith, though it is seldom spoken, and if we violate the tenets of that creed it rebukes us and proves by overwhelming evidence that we are wrong.

The first article in the creed of science is, God is great—not great as we once thought Him when we regarded this little earth as the center of His thought and the theater of His operation, and supposed that sun, moon, and stars were but lanterns hung in the canopy of heaven to give us light; but vastly, immeasurably great. We look up into the same sky into which Abraham looked up on the plains of Shinar, but with how different an eye! We know the illimitable spaces which separate those shining wanderers from us and from one another. To us the innumerable stars which differ from one another in glory are worlds like our own, or suns shining by their own light. Beyond the range of our most powerful instrument, beyond the limit of our utmost thought, flies the thought that there is no limit until, at last, thought, exhausted, stands still. Upon every educated mind this sight still produces the effect that it produced on Immanuel Kant when he said, "Two things in this world astonish and confound me, the starry heavens at night and the height and purity of the moral law."

The second article in the creed of science is, God is One; for it shows us all things proceeding from one Source and according to one mighty plan. Whether science can establish monotheism or not, it is the only

form of theism to which it gives the least credence. William James's whimsical inclination to return to polytheism hardly produced a ripple of interest, but were religion seriously to manifest such a disposition science would instantly rebuke her.

The third article in the creed of science is, God is wise. He employs means to ends. The universe does not consist of discrete particles moving at random, but of innumerable particles working together to attain definite results. I am aware that that must be qualified. There is a race of men, not very numerous, called materialists, who recognize no purpose in Nature, no soul in man, and therefore no intelligence in God, but in the face of the overwhelming evidence of purpose and of progress Evolution is bringing in, their position becomes constantly more untenable. However the eye was made and its thirteen marvelous processes assembled, few persons can bring themselves to believe that it was not made to see with. Or when we see a hard bit of horn attached to the beak of a chicken which the chick actually uses to chip its way out of the shell and then drops in a few days, the most natural inference is that this bit of horn was made and attached to the beak of the chick to help it into its new life and to keep it from perishing in the shell. Or when we see a spider spinning her web in which she captures the flies on which she lives, and hiding herself that they may not see her, just as the fisherman spreads his net and hides himself that the fishes may not see him, one may suppose, without insanity, that the purpose in one case is

to catch flies, just as in the other it is to catch fish. At all events, I observe that even those physiologists who deny all purpose in Nature break their heads and confess their science incomplete so long as there is one organ in the human body whose function they cannot explain with reference to the economy of the whole.

There are two ways of viewing Nature, as there are two ways of viewing anything. Suppose we have before us a page of Shakespeare's "Hamlet." We may regard it merely as a physical phenomenon—that is, as black impressions on a sheet of white paper. But does this quite describe it? Is there not, after all, quite a difference between a page on which Shakespeare's mind has been at work and another page just like it on which black characters have been imprinted at haphazard on white pages? If you do not think so, try it and see. (Paulsen.)

Spirit and mechanism, therefore, are not so hostile to each other. To attain palpable results one works through the other. Grant that the world is a machine: so is your body also a machine, yet it is held together, lives and acts by the indwelling of an invisible spirit, and only as long as there is a soul within it does it hold together at all. Neither is there any necessary hostility between religion and science,—and in using this well-worn phrase I have a definite purpose. At most there is opposition and antagonism between imperfect religion and imperfect science. So long as this hostility persists and each regards the other with dislike and suspicion man will never attain the high and free

development of his nature. Part of it will be paralyzed by doubt, or dwarfed by suppression, and his whole nature will be weakened by the dissociation of his noblest faculties. We shall be prevented from undertaking tasks which would be easily within our power were mind and spirit, knowledge and faith, working harmoniously together, but which will ever be beyond us as long as these are at variance. We are bidden to love the Lord our God with all our mind, and it is absurd that we should have to choose between piety and intelligence when we desire both.

Science represents truth, sanity, disinterestedness, frankness, devotion, accurate observation, and correct thinking. It has fashioned an incomparable method without which we can do nothing aright. Religion represents faith, aspiration, progress, poetry, discontent with the present, consecration, love of God and love of man, self-denial, self-sacrifice. One does not have to reflect long to perceive that these precious and holy things are both of God or to see in how many ways one can help and serve the other. And this is the only reconciliation worth trying for. What we want is not mere tolerance, not the grudging assent on the part of the one to the existence and ideals of the other, *but the application of scientific method to the problem of religion, and the ennobling of science by the religious spirit*, lacking which it will soon fall into the hands of mercenary hucksters and cease to interest us. We have one common enemy in the self-seekers of mankind.

The care and treatment of the sick is one of these

opportunities. A dozen new ways have been discovered during the past twenty years by which the well and healthy-minded may minister profitably and with blessing to the diseased in body and soul. We have shown even in the case of consumptives how important is the moral condition of the patient, and because we have kept this fact constantly before our minds we have succeeded in checking and arresting the disease in as large a proportion of patients in the tenements and slums of Boston as has been relieved by the best sanatoria situated in the most favorable localities. Yet had we disregarded the exact methods of science in dealing with this disease we should have cured no one.

If this is true of such a disease as tuberculosis, in which the mind is usually strong and optimistic, it is still more true of other diseases in which the whole personality is affected and in the case of inveterate evil habits. He who under these conditions ignores the moral and the spiritual condition of his patient and thinks only of the body accomplishes little. A large part of the world perfectly understands this now, and soon the whole world will know it. Yet here also faith and science should work together, for the problem is the restoration of the whole man or the creation of the new man.

Prayer is another field that needs the co-operation of science and religion. The attitude of many men of science toward prayer has been false simply because it is unscientific. They have rejected prayer, not because

they have personally proved its vanity and worthlessness, but because it does not fit into their preconceived view of the order of Nature. For the same reason the possibility of radio-activity would have been denied until the day when radium was discovered. And yet perhaps the power which would unify all our powers is passing unseen before our very doors. As a matter of fact, almost all men who have rejected and ridiculed prayer have been men who never prayed. Such criticisms we may regard with the utmost indifference. If such men do not care to experiment with prayer they should not pronounce upon it. When men who have earnestly and faithfully prayed tell me that there is nothing in prayer I will believe them if I can, or endeavor to discover the defect of their manner of praying. Until then I shall continue to follow the dictates of my heart, and I will rejoice in the evidence of the power of prayer which experience constantly reveals to me.

Yet here, too, we greatly need the help of scientific method. We know that if prayer is a real power in this universe, like everything else it is under laws, but we very dimly apprehend what those laws are. Sometimes we pray with conviction and power, and our prayers are mighty and effective. In some way we have fulfilled the necessary conditions and have come into contact with the Source of power, but we know not how we did it. Sometimes for weeks and months our prayers seem to rise no higher than the ceiling of our rooms and to accomplish nothing, yet we know not

why. Should we understand prayer as Jesus understood it, we should become like him, and all things would be possible to us; but we are still groping amid the very rudiments of it. Here is a wonderful field, the most wonderful field in the world, but a field which we shall never traverse except under the guidance of science and by the aid of its exact methods.

Social betterment is another task devolving upon mankind, a task too great for a crippled and divided humanity, but not too great were our aspirations and our methods harmonized and united. Religion warns us that something is wrong, that our present state of social inequality and social injustice does not fulfil the law of Christ. Science tells what is wrong, and also how those wrongs may be rectified. But until both resolutely attack the problem together the task is too great for the strength of either. Religion gives us the motive, the desire, the necessary enthusiasm to attempt it, but without painstaking knowledge and comprehension of the methods by which the cause of humanity can really be served religion is helpless.

The little church in Jerusalem once made the heroic experiment, relying on no human help, when "they that believed had all things common, and ate their bread with gladness and singleness of heart." But in a few years that experiment came to naught, and St. Paul was obliged to take up "a collection" for the poor saints which dwelt at Jerusalem. That experiment has served as an ideal through the ages, but without scientific knowledge it could not succeed.

Lastly, immortality is the final problem which confronts science. David Strauss looked forward to a day when science should have put down her last enemy, which is immortality. We look forward to the day when science shall establish forever man's survival of death on an impregnable basis. Let us not forget that this is the way which Jesus chose. He had little to say on the general question. He brought forward no new arguments in favor of life after death. Jesus' contribution to the problem of immortality consisted in rising from the dead and in giving his Disciples concrete proofs of his continued existence in the world of spirits.

That is what the world is looking for to-day, and it is no credit to American science that it lags so far behind the science of other civilized lands in responding to this appeal. For two thousand years faith has been struggling with this question, which might be settled in a single century by the exact methods of scientific observation and experiment if the same talent and devotion were bestowed upon it as have been given to the life of Jesus. Faith and philosophy have carried their arguments and analogies as far as they will go, with the result that those believe in another life who are predisposed to such a belief, while the majority of men think and act and live and die exactly as they would do were this life their only life. But were all educated men as convinced of the certainty of another life as they are of any of the established laws of Nature, and did they know that by a good or evil life and by a

good or evil conscience they were laying up certain happiness or unhappiness for themselves, such knowledge would have the effect that so tremendous a truth ought to possess. I do not propose this as a substitute for religion. I too am aware that Jesus said, "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Yet he rose from the dead and men believed, and one cannot doubt that the greatest problem before man to-day is still his own immortality.

So on all sides we see opportunities of enlarging and strengthening the conditions of human life, which can be realized only by the harmonious co-operation of our highest faculties. Human nature will always be diseased while this profound cleft persists between mind and spirit. The period of strife, of bitterness and derision and negation is over. The creative period of affirmation and of co-operation is at hand. The thought flies from one end of the world to the other, and the memory which will brighten my last hours is that I have been permitted to behold this glorious vision and to participate, however humbly, in the great work.

Part II

ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF JESUS

I

CHRIST'S LOVE FOR INDIVIDUALS

And behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment:

For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.—St. Matthew ix: 20, 21.

THIS event took place when the Lord was going with his Disciples to the house of Jairus, who had summoned him because his little daughter was desperately ill. A great multitude of people, excited by the expectation of the dramatic spectacle they hoped to witness, was surging about him, thronging him on every side. Among these innumerable contacts he felt one of another sort. It was the timid touch of a woman, who, abashed and shamefaced and desiring to avoid attention, yet hoping to obtain a blessing, gently touched the hem of his garment.

Instantly Jesus stopped and demanded, "Who touched me?" The Disciples were disposed to ridicule him: "Thou seest how the multitude presseth thee, and askest thou, Who touched me?" But he knew the difference. It was the touch of faith he felt, the appealing touch of some poor human being who desired help from him, and, though with his clairvoyant senses he knew that faith had met with its response and that the

timid appeal had been answered, he was not satisfied. He would know more of this suppliant. He would not have her go without a more personal contact with him. He seems to have divined that it was a woman who had done this. "And he looked round about," we read, to see her who had done this thing. "But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done to her, came and fell down before him and told him all the truth." He did not claim the credit of the act which he had not intended to perform. He did not pretend there was healing virtue in his clothes, but he spoke to her affectionately and kindly, and said, "Daughter, thy faith has made thee whole; go in peace and be whole of thy plague."

One of the most touching and most marvelous aspects of Christ's life is his love for individuals. Marvelous and touching when we remember the tasks which were his! Here he was, with his infinite mission and the brief moment of his short life in which to perform it. His life was not measured like ours, by months and years, but by days and weeks. In one year, from one springtime to the next springtime, he must make the everlasting revelation of God, formulate and deliver the thoughts and principles which should be the guiding stars of humanity forever after, call and train his Disciples, preach the Gospel to thousands, and establish his religion so that it should be able to continue without him. Who would suppose that with all this devolving upon him he would have time or strength for aught else? And yet when we

look at the life of Jesus, what do we see? We see him surrounded by people forever pressing upon him with their humble, personal needs. And we see him, not shrinking from them, not putting them off with the excuse that he is weary, that he has no time for them, that he must be alone in order to think or to pray, but welcoming them, dining with them, going long journeys with them to visit those who could not come to him, inquiring into their personal needs and sufferings, turning away from no service however humble, spending himself, his love, his time, his energy, as if he had nothing else to do. And the world has recognized this element of his greatness, and it would rather lose almost any other memory that it possesses than the memory of Jesus Christ surrounded by the miserable, always patient, always gentle and hopeful, always offering his power to our mortal weakness. When this aspect of Jesus' life suffered an eclipse, and these divine acts were relegated by an unbelieving generation to the realm of myth and fancy, his whole personality suffered an eclipse, and when the absolute naturalness, truth, and reality of this great ministry of Christ was re-established—and in this work Emmanuel Church has humbly taken part—the character of Christ revealed itself to men as it has not done for ages.

It is not merely that a certain number of sick folk were healed. Probably a greater number are restored to health from just as desperate diseases in one of our great hospitals every year. It is not that we look upon these acts as the signs or credentials of the truth

or authority of his teaching, which he himself never did, but that in these scenes we discern a life worthy of the Son of God, a picture of man's faith and need on the one side, and of Jesus' love and power on the other, which is the most sacred thing this world possesses. And on his side, without this intimate contact with life, without his knowledge of every phase of human nature, would he have been what he was? Does any one suppose that his sayings, made of the very texture of human life, would have occurred to a lonely student who withdraws from the world in order that he may ponder his thoughts in solitude? What gives its timeless and eternal character to Christ's teaching is that it is spun out of human life, the one thing that never grows old. What gave him his absolute originality and enabled him to escape from all the dreary verbiage of Jewish lore is that he derived truth directly from God and from contact with men and women, not from reading other people's ideas in books. At no time of his life, no matter how great the present duty, no matter how hard destiny pressed on him, was he too preoccupied to stop, to ask who touched him, to dismiss his own purpose and anxieties in order that he might give himself wholly to the man or woman who needed him.

Once he was going through Jericho. He was on his way to Jerusalem, so grave and sorrowful as he revolved in his mind the great issues of life and death which were closing around him that, we read, even the Disciples, as they followed him on the way, were afraid.

It was a critical moment when, if ever, Jesus might feel himself excused from all external interruption. Suddenly from out the vast crowd that surrounded him there rang a doleful cry, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." This time the Disciples were scandalized. It was another of those sick people! They looked and were relieved. It was only the old blind beggar who had sat at the gate of the city for years. Him, at least, they could dispose of. "And they commanded him to hold his peace." Jesus also had heard the sufferer's appeal, and he stood still and commanded that he should be brought unto him. And when he saw the man with the sightless orbs he said, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" And he said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." "Receive thy sight," said Jesus, "thy faith hath saved thee."

Yes, faith had not deceived blind Bartimaeus that day. It led him to spring up and press forward through the crowd in his helpless darkness. It led him to cry out to Jesus and to resist those who would have held him back. He had heard the noise of the passing multitude, and he had asked what it meant. "And they said unto him, Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." So he came. Perhaps a voice told him that if he was not saved then he would never be saved. If so, it told him truly. For when Jesus passed out of Jericho that morning it was never to re-enter it. For him it was the last time. In a few days those feet that had gone about doing good, those hands which had given life

and health to so many, would be nailed to the cross. But Bartimaeus came, and Jesus cast aside his own grief and fearful preoccupation and gave him sight. He would not pass by a blind man who cried out to him for help and leave him blind.

And even on the cross in the midst of his own torment he heard another voice lifted in supplication to him. It was humanity's last appeal to Jesus in the person of a crucified thief who somewhere in the old days of Galilee on the outskirts of some crowd had heard him speak of the Kingdom of God, and who ventured to offer his humble, deprecating request. This day they two had been side by side, companions in suffering. Jesus had seen him, and he longs that Jesus shall not forget him: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom." Instantly he who had kept silence so long, and who had no word to answer to the infinitude of abuse which had been heaped on his head, replies, "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." With this last trophy of his grace, "like a single flower in the hand of a dead man," Jesus enters the vast spaces of the nether world.

Is not this the disposition, are not these the very acts that made Jesus the Saviour of the World? I do not mean merely contact with the few classical figures of the New Testament, but that Christ's disposition toward them has drawn to him unnumbered thousands of suffering, weak, tempted, afflicted men and women through the ages who through him have found rest unto their souls.

For this is our feeling for those who have succeeded in awakening our faith and in kindling our enthusiasm. We want to get near them, we want to touch them. What we hear of them interests us, their words inspire us. But before we will give ourselves to them we must put them to the supreme test of submitting our personal problem to them, of letting their life touch our life. The wise and thoughtful book, the penetrating charm of the poem, the rich experience of the sermon, touches us profoundly. It already inspires us with a kind of faith. That man, we say, at some time in his life has known my grief, he has carried my burden; he has found peace, perhaps he can help me to find it. The book, the sermon, the poem, cannot save me; the man might.

This, you feel, is the supreme test of his mission. So you draw near to him and touch him. Perhaps he knows it and gives himself to you as if he had nothing else to live for. Perhaps he knows it not, but goes on writing new books, singing new songs, preaching new sermons, all unconscious of your personal life and yet ministering to it, and laying bare, as he does so, the richness or the poverty, the tenderness or the coarseness of his own soul. This you soon perceive. You have come near to the real man. You know him now. Nothing that he could say or do could surprise you much. And as you look back on the gifts he has given you—profounder views of God and the soul, serener courage, higher perceptions of the possibilities of life—you cannot refer them to this utterance of his or to that,

but rather to his example, the impression which his soul, unselfish and true in all its relations, has made on your soul.

Only a very great and sincere man can impress us in this way, and this is the supreme service such men render their fellows—they help others to be great. We feel this acutely. We suspect that most of our heroes are half unreal. We dare not put them to that supreme test. We do not wish to come too near to them. We would rather take them for what they give themselves out to be than to prove them for ourselves. They may amuse us; they may instruct us. We do not expect them to save us, and they could not do it if they tried. That is the penalty we all pay for our insincerity and our selfishness. It makes us so helpless. We look very respectable and very fine marching along with the multitude, intent on our own business, going to do some good work. But let some poor, tempted, sorrowful, despairing human being come to us and touch us unawares, and no virtue goes out of us; he goes away poorer and sadder than he came. It is only Jesus out of whom virtue always flowed. It is only he who understood every type of character, every form of temptation, every depth of human sorrow, and it is only from him that we can have this divine disposition. Without his grand, unifying principle such a constant turning aside from what we regard as the real business of life would be disastrous. He has taught us that the one thing needful is love. The world will say, as it has always said, that by letting ourselves go out in so many

directions we fritter away our power and lose that singleness of aim which is so important. He has shown us how such a disposition infinitely enriches life, because one great purpose runs through it. "He that seeketh to save his life shall lose it." By entering deeply the life of another we do not lose our own life; we find it. By giving ourselves to a great cause we do not sink our own personality; we acquire a higher, mightier personality. But above all causes, above all other pursuits and occupations, is the precious privilege of serving humanity, of succoring men and women, of loving our friends and counseling them aright. This is our real business in life, did we but know it. Our wealth and position, our culture and knowledge, are but means to this end.

And how many there are, coming to us when we do not know it and touching us when we do not expect it! Yet we discern the touch of faith. How many there are who sound our hearts by a sigh, a light word, a trifling appeal, and who go away richer or poorer by virtue of what they have found in us! Jesus did all things well. He has accomplished as much indirectly and unconsciously as he has accomplished consciously. To be loved as he has been loved he must have been infinitely lovable. Yet even he said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself." Let us think of that when we are tempted to be false, to be cruel, to be heartless. It is worth while to be otherwise for the sake of those who look to us, who are good because we are good, and who believe because we believe. Yes, Christ knew that

"for their sakes" many a man would do what he would not do for himself.

Only a shelter for my head I sought
  One stormy winter's night.
To me the blessing of my life was brought,
  Turning the whole world bright.
How can I thank Thee for a gift so sweet,
  O dearest Heavenly Friend?
I sought a resting-place for weary feet
  And found my journey's end.

Only the latchet of a friendly door
  My timid fingers tried.
A loving heart, with all its precious store,
  To me was opened wide.
I sought for refuge from a passing shower,
  My sun shall always shine.
I would have sat beside the hearth an hour,
  And thy whole heart was mine.[1]

—RUCKERT.

[1] Translated by James Freeman Clarke.

II

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

The Son of Man hath power upon earth to forgive sins.—St. Luke v: 24.

THE scene from which these words are taken is very familiar. A man suffering from some form of paralysis had been brought to Jesus to be healed. Instead of concerning himself with the man's physical symptoms, Jesus, either as the result of conversation with the sick man or because the disease itself suggested it, offered relief to his conscience. "Son," said he, kindly and affectionately, "thy sins be forgiven thee."

The Scribes and Pharisees began to murmur. They had been balked of the pleasure of seeing a miracle performed, and the words which Jesus had uttered seemed to them blasphemous. In reply Jesus said: "What reason ye in your hearts? For whether is easier to say, thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, rise up and walk?" I have often wondered which Jesus considered easier. He did not explain, but I believe he meant that to him it was easier to say to a paralytic "Arise and walk" than to bring peace to his conscience and give him the conviction that his sin was forgiven.

"The Son of Man hath power upon earth to forgive sins." Probably it is his greatest power, a power that will never die. It is a power which has brought to him thousands upon thousands of men and women who would have come for no other reason, who have asked not health nor escape from the consequences of their own acts, but deliverance from the haunting sense of guilt, and an assurance of forgiveness. It is useless to cry out against the desire of the human heart for confession and absolution, for in spite of all denunciations it is and will be sought by men forever. The instinct is one thing; the institution provided to satisfy it is another. Confession is like any other human institution that contains abuses—like Christian Science, for example. Merely to denounce it and to ridicule it only strengthens it. Men do not seek either on account of its errors or abuses, but on account of its truth and its strength, and if we would avoid its abuses we must recognize its truth and employ its means of help without countenancing its errors. It is an abuse of confession and absolution to teach that by them we escape the consequences of our own acts. It is an abuse of them to teach that the power of forgiving sins is confined to one order of men called priests. It is an exaggeration and an abuse to teach that confession and absolution are frequently necessary to all persons at all times as a mere routine of the Christian life. It is a dangerous abuse to rob a human soul of its independence and moral responsibility and to commit these inalienable prerogatives to another. It is an abuse to demand the

same experience of sudden spiritual awakening and conversion of all men, for many men are incapable of it.

The truth and the need which we can never eradicate consist in the fact that at times the burden of sin and guilt and sorrow of the human heart cries for expression, just as its loneliness cries for companionship. There is something in the unutterable loneliness of guilt that men cannot bear, and they prefer to confess even at the risk of their lives. A man once confessed to me an unprovoked murder of which he had never been suspected, and I asked him why he had done so dangerous a thing without even claiming the sanctity of the confessional. He replied: "I am taking my chances. I care little if you denounce me and give me up. That is for you to decide. What I want to know is, is it possible for me to be forgiven? I cannot resist the Spirit of God any longer."

A short time ago I saw a man in a distant city who has given concern to many experienced physicians. He was apparently paralyzed on one side of his body, and undoubtedly would have been diagnosed by St. Luke as a man sick of the palsy. He informed me that his paralysis was not what troubled him, but the fact that he was not reconciled to God. "Assure me that I am forgiven," he said; "give me a reason for living, and then you may say to me, Rise up and walk, and I shall obey you." The result was as he anticipated.

I know that men are differently constituted in this respect, and also that their disposition appears to depend but little on the gravity of their offenses. Many

persons whose sins are heavy and serious apparently are but little affected by them, while others suffer intolerable anguish for what we might regard as very venial offenses. These are they whom William James has called "the unhealthy-minded." I have never liked the name; but by whatever name we call them, they form a large and important part of humanity. The greatest of the Psalmists were men of this type, and in their sense of sin they struck the deepest note of the Old Testament. St. Paul must have been such a man, for he cried: "Wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Augustine, with his fierce struggles and his divided will, belonged to this family of God's children. Martin Luther, with all his robustness of mind, was one of them. And in modern times there is Count Tolstoy, who, while possessing all that the world could give him, erected a gallows in his library to hang himself, simply because he found a life without God intolerable.

The reason why men of the first type I have mentioned are not more concerned for their sins is that they are not deeply conscious of them in the sense that they do not feel that evil is wrecking their personality. Their life still retains much of its inward unity and purpose. They are conscious that the core and center of their life is sound, and they regard sin as something alien and superficial. They ascribe it to inherited tendencies, to temporary conditions and external temptations for which they feel little sorrow or responsibility, and they hope to escape it little by little. What dis-

tinguishes the others, however, is their profound sense of duality. They are drawn in different directions. They have ideals [1] which they cannot realize. Whether their sins seem little or great to others, they are conscious of a cleft which runs to the depth of their being and which threatens the integrity of their personality. Other men may not be troubled by their sins, but they are. To them sin is a dreadful reality of life. They look back and see how evil committed long ago has cast its gloom and bondage over their existence and over the lives of others. There is a horror of thick darkness over their souls, a sense of woe and guilt from which they hope to be free. What they ask of religion is chiefly redemption and escape. What they desire is liberty, "a life not correlated with death," a peace which depends on unity of will and conscience, not on fluctuating events; and before that gulf will close, something great and precious must be cast into it—the sacrifice of a troubled spirit, a surrender to God. Something must die and pass away. The old dark, evil, mocking self must perish, that the new man may be born. It is as if two abysses, the abyss that saves and the abyss that destroys, were struggling within them, and that one must prevail. A woman once said to me, "Who could guess that the mind has so many doors that open directly into hell?"

[1] I believe that men capable of undergoing the sudden and profound change of genuine "conversion" invariably present symptoms of dissociation. The conversion consists in the suppression of one personality and the liberation of another.

There is no question that such persons offer the deepest challenge to religion. Defiant of religion, deaf to it as they often appear, they are the persons who need it most and who can make the noblest use of it. It was the perception of this that caused Jesus to love sinners as he did. Whether these persons are the present slaves of passion and of habit or are victims of remorse for the past, they have the first claim on a religion which calls itself the Religion of Humanity. Jesus during his lifetime was continually beset by them. Whether they were called demoniacs or publicans and sinners, he had them ever in his heart, saying, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save the lost." "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Can the religion of Christ help them? If not, it is for some, but not for all. It is for them that need it least, not for them that need it most. It may be useful and beautiful as an adjunct to life's blessings, but it cannot save, it cannot deliver, nor turn life's curse into blessing. (William James.)

Let me say, then, that thousands of such men and women have found a peace and happiness of which ordinary contented Christians know nothing. They have risen to heights of heroism and virtue far above the natural and negative goodness of those who have never fallen. They are the saints and heroes of the Kingdom of God. "These are they which have come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." And, having been converted themselves, they have

mightily strengthened their brethren, for they know all the pitfalls of human life. They have touched all our sorrows and can sympathize with every weakness of the human heart.

What can such men and women carry with them into the Kingdom of Heaven? They cannot carry innocence. They cannot carry a pure, unsullied heart that has been Christ's always. This is forever beyond their power. But there is one gift they can bring without which Heaven would be poorer—their experience. I do not mean the knowledge of their guilt and crimes, which has no place in the Kingdom of Christ, but the knowledge of God's love, which would not let them go; the memory of the miracle of grace which delivered them; the consciousness of God's forgiveness and goodness, which waited so patiently, which received so graciously, which saved so mightily. This they have, and no power in earth or hell can take it from them. They know the deepest, tenderest side of God which can be revealed to man. There is something perfectly natural and unaffected in Christ's love of sinners. He loved them for what he saw in them. Though he never contrasted them with the pure and true of heart, he did contrast them with the contented and self-righteous, to the latter's great detriment. Heavily as the problem of evil presses on human life, it receives light here. Men who have wandered into it and have been overtaken by it and have escaped from it are often gentler, deeper, purer, more generous than they were before. They have a gratitude toward God

which the unfallen can hardly feel. Between their sin and its reward stands the memory of their wonderful experience.

The other day in a friend's library I saw a splendid engraving of Napoleon Bonaparte made a few years before his death. On the opposite wall hung a fine representation of the head of the Apollo Belvedere—one the symbol of perfect, flawless, youthful beauty, the other the face of a man in whom the human race seems to epitomize itself. One glances with pleasure and admiration at the untroubled, unsullied face of the god; but how quickly one's glance returns to the troubled face of the man, to the marvel of intellect and ambition domed in that vast forehead, the profound meditation and melancholy of the eye, the implacable firmness and constancy of mouth and chin, the colossal force of that compact head and form! In the one, changeless, deathless beauty; in the other, the power of thought, the sharp chiseling of sorrow and experience, the might of intellect, the fate of nations, indomitable energy of will, a power capable of shaking the world out of its course. The one delights us, but in the presence of the other life itself is unrolled before us.

"The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins." To-day one should not comment on these words without explaining that the expression "The Son of Man" here probably means no more than "man." Scholars know this, but they have hesitated to draw the inference and to restore to this mighty text its true meaning. Man hath power on earth to forgive sin,

not merely sin against himself, but sin against God. Man hath power on earth to forgive sin, and perhaps that power is not limited to this earth, but possesses an eternal validity. "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shalt be loosed in Heaven" is a promise not addressed to one man, nor to one order of men. When a man actuated by a spirit of love, guided by the light of conscience and the revealed will of God, pronounces another forgiven, according to the word of Christ Jesus, he expresses the will of God, and the sinner is forgiven; and that is what so many desire—to reveal their soul to another, that he may know them for what they are, and to have the word of absolution spoken with conviction by human lips. No form is necessary. No caste or order of men is necessary. Any man who believes in a God of Love, in a God who hears prayer and is touched by human penitence and sorrow, may say to any other who truly repents, "Thou art forgiven, and by the authority committed unto me by Jesus Christ I absolve thee from all thy sins."

III

FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.—St. Matthew v: 44, 45.

I SUPPOSE this may be reckoned as the greatest and most characteristic saying of Christ. In his doctrine of the forgiveness of injuries Jesus broke most radically with the morality of this world and showed most plainly the nature of his salvation. We recognize this, and when we say a person has a Christian disposition we usually mean that he has a forgiving disposition. A great many of Christ's other sayings have their counterparts in the moral codes of mankind, but, with a single exception, this one stands alone. Other virtues which Christ recognized—purity, integrity of heart, and love for our fellow-men—the heathen world also recognized, and those persons who practised them were regarded with admiration; but the duty of unlimited forgiveness they did not recognize as a virtue. Had it been proposed to them they would have indignantly rejected it. The Assyrian sculptors, and sometimes the

Egyptian, knew no more delicate form of flattery than to represent their conquering kings in the very act of inflicting the most horrible sufferings on their conquered enemies. People not merely did not forgive their enemies; they did not think they ought to do so. A man regarded himself as fortunate if he could say on his death-bed that he had done as much harm to his enemies as he had done good to his friends.

Nor can we find this doctrine taught in the Old Testament. The Old Testament writers were little if at all higher than the heathen in this respect. This was one of the places where Jesus was obliged absolutely to reject the spirit and teaching of the religion he honored so highly. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old times, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, resist not evil, but if a man smite you on one cheek turn to him the other also. If he sue you at the law and take away your coat, give him your cloak. If he compel you to go with him one mile, go with him twain."

The one great teacher, as far as I know, who agreed with Jesus on this matter and who taught it independently was Gautama Buddha, and it is not without significance that the two greatest religious teachers who have blessed this earth should have enunciated independently the duty of absolute forgiveness. Christianity has no injunctions on this point stricter than those which Buddha laid on his disciples: "Though an enemy should cut your body bit by bit, yet let not a thought of anger or of resent-

ment arise in your heart." "Nothing so full of victory as patience." Most characteristic is this saying: "Though a wicked man foolishly do me harm, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love. The more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me; the reward of my good deeds always returning to me, the poison of the slanderer's words always returning to him." Noble as these expressions are, and fully as their author lived up to them, it is plain that the motive which lay behind them was very different from the motive of Jesus. With Buddha it is but the law of cause and effect in the spiritual world, the harm that hating does the hater. He did not lay on his disciples the duty of forgiveness because God is love, or that they might be the children of their Father in Heaven or because the offender is a brother, but that they might avoid the sorrow and the injury that hatred inflicts. The doctrine of Jesus, therefore, in its essence stands alone, and it is the very heart of all his teachings. It is a command which the great majority of those who call themselves Christians not only do not obey, but which they do not even treat seriously. "The Sermon on the Mount stands worthy of its name as an ideal and a dream of the most exalted thinker in his most exalted mood, but which no one thinks of putting into practice." It is the charter of our modern civilization, from which whatever claim we have to civilization springs, but which civilization contemptuously tramples under foot. Only yesterday the German Emperor declared that if any officer of the army or

navy refused to seek the life of a brother officer of his own nationality in a duel on the ground that his religion forbade it he should be cashiered from the service. Yet popular sentiment is not unanimous on that point, for when this injunction was promulgated in the Reichstag it was greeted with groans and hisses, not merely by Protestants and Catholics, but by Jews and Socialists.

In the nineteenth century one eminent man, Count Leo Tolstoy, literally accepted this saying of Jesus, which he found plainly written in the New Testament. He accepted it and for years he strove to practise it, and he suffered much. He was shunned by his friends, he was regarded as a fanatic, he was excommunicated by his Church and was buried in unconsecrated ground. But he wielded the greatest moral influence of our times, and he left an impression which was that of a Hebrew prophet rather than that of a modern man. And he has gained this glorious reward, that wherever Christ's doctrine of forgiveness is preached throughout the world the name of Tolstoy shall be mentioned as a memorial unto him.

How are we to regard this command of Jesus? Is it the weakest thing in his religion, which ever closes it in its entirety to high-minded men? Or is it the strongest thing, in which Christ most fully expresses his own disposition and his life? It must be one or the other; and until we see clearly that forgiveness is the strongest thing and the wisest thing for us to practise we shall never practise it, because it makes such enormous

demands upon our human nature, and because it is in direct opposition to about one-half of the impulses of our hearts.

Let us ask, then, why Jesus demanded it. He demanded it primarily because it was his own inflexible rule of life. For there is one experience of human life to which Jesus was a complete stranger, one emotion common to us which he never knew. That is the emotion of hatred and revenge. Jesus never hated. He opposed evil resolutely. He unmasked it, he denounced it, but he did not hate the evil-doer. One of the most extraordinary traits of his character was his perfectly natural and unaffected love of sinners. His feeling for them was a feeling of affection and kindness, of pity and the desire to save. If this had been with him a mere matter of words we should have doubted it, because it would seem too wonderful to be true. But the whole content of his soul was laid bare on the Cross. There his heart spoke, his life spoke; and if there had been any hatred or bitterness lurking in them it would have spoken also. But the Cross only brought to light new depths of love, prayers for the forgiveness of his enemies, promise of victory on earth and of entrance into Heaven. Whatever victory Jesus won he won through love. Whatever salvation and new life for man he has given us, he has given us through love. That is the final, the supreme difference between Jesus and other men. He alone dared trust love absolutely, so absolutely as to refuse to give hatred any place at all in his own life or in the lives of his followers. We

have, at all events, reached a point of spiritual development and enlightenment where we can perceive some flashes of truth in this principle. Humanity has enthroned him as the visible, perfect Image of God. It has accepted him as its highest representative. It would not have his life other than it was. And, for our part, we know that whatever blessing has come to us has come through love. It is not mountains and plains and rivers and food and clothing that make the world for us. It is men and women and little children that make the world when they come, and that end the world for us when they go. So far as we have loved we have been blessed, and so far as we have hated we have been cursed.

But, it may be said, there is the great difficulty. Love and hatred cannot be so easily separated from each other. Love is pitiless. Love erects absolute ideals and makes inexorable demands, and when those ideals are shattered and those demands dishonored it turns to hatred and bitterness. Beside the bright image of Love stalks the dark image of Jealousy and Suspicion, as shadow follows substance. The brighter the image of light the darker the shadow. So it is said, "Jealousy is the shadow cast by love when something intervenes between it and its object." The injuries we find it the hardest to forgive are not the affronts put upon us by strangers. They are not the opposition to our plans and purposes we must encounter from the world. They are the wounds wherewith we are wounded in the house of our friends.

They are the disloyalty of those on whose loyalty we counted as we count on our own soul. They are the failures to meet our needs and to understand our sorrows on the part of those to whom we had the right to look for help and support. They are the disillusions, the blank disappointments, the unkindnesses, which rob us of our hope and which undermine the very foundation of our life by destroying our trust. Yes, love is a terrible thing, and he who appeals to it must abide by it. Buddha saw that and drew back. "Despair," said he, "is the child of hope, and hatred is the child of love. Therefore neither hope nor love." Jesus saw it and pressed on, because he saw that love is the very nature of God, and therefore infinite. "In God there is nothing finite, in God there is nothing temporal. In God there is nothing that inclines toward death." Love is not bounded by hatred. There is love beyond love. Beyond the first mere passion, which is scarcely more than an animal instinct, is strong love, unselfish love, love victorious over death. Beyond love that is all-personal, all-demanding, is love that asks only the privilege of loving and serving. Beyond blind love, which moves in its wonderful world of illusion, is love which dares to behold reality with open eyes. Beyond jealous love, inexorable love, pitiless love, is forgiving, saving love. Beyond all human love is Divine love. Beyond the love of men and women is the love of Jesus Christ.

Can we imagine that the love of Jesus was not betrayed, that it suffered no disillusion and no shocking,

dreadful surprise? He loved men, and he heard them prefer Barabbas and clamor that he be nailed to a cross. He loved his disciples, and when he needed them they forsook him. He loved Simon Peter and was proud of him and called him a Rock, and Peter denied him with an oath and a curse. But Jesus' love was not shaken. All the hatred of the world could not turn his heart's love into gall. He loved them still, and prayed for them and made excuses for their weakness. He did not taunt and reproach Peter for his infamous cowardice any more than he reproached Mary Magdalene for her seven devils. He looked into his eyes with affection. He took him by the hand. He restored him to his office. He forgave him and bade him feed his sheep.

And can our life go on without forgiveness? Is there a human being who has had much to do with us who has not much to forgive in us? Can we lay a loved one in the grave without longing for forgiveness for our innumerable failures and our innumerable misdeeds? Is not that always our bitterest thought—that we have done so little to make the one we really loved happy and so much to make him unhappy? And what we so greatly need ourselves can we refuse freely to give to others? Never without still sharper pangs. Never without separating ourselves from Jesus Christ and jeopardizing our own chance of forgiveness. When we begin to hate, then we know what suffering really is, and if in our blind resentment we succeed in inflicting injury or ruin on him we thought we hated,

then we begin to hate ourselves. "A human life, how small a thing to take! how vast a thing to employ!"

There is so much that is final in human life, so much that is tragic and inexorable, we may thank our God on bended knees that the way to hope can always be opened and the door to life's darkest sorrow and its most everlasting regret can be closed with the words: "I forgive you. I love you." Nothing but love can save us. Nothing but hatred can destroy us.

IV

GETHSEMANE

And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest; it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

—St. Mark xiv: 41, 42.

IT is with awe and trembling that we contemplate the last scene in Jesus' life, which we associate with the Garden of Gethsemane. Holy and precious is each one of our Saviour's last steps on earth, but this is most holy and precious. To Christians, after the hill of Calvary, Gethsemane, which saw the deepest humiliation of the Son of Man, is the most sacred spot on earth, a spot which faith still strives to identify. Even to this day that garden is pointed out on the Mount of Olives. Last night it swam in the pale glory of the paschal moon or was obscured by clouds like those which shrouded Jesus' soul. The stones still lie scattered here and there on which the disciples rested while Jesus went to and fro in prayerful agony. Almost circlewise stand eight venerable olive-trees whose age the believing eye prolongs back and back even to the days of the Son of Man.

In that garden took place the mysterious conflict

which we shall never understand until we are more like Jesus. The older Gospels have not hesitated to paint for us in sympathetic yet thoroughly human colors the death-struggle of the Lord, the prostrate figure, the sweat of blood, even the agonized prayer to God for the removal, or at least the mitigation, of his sufferings. Only St. John, true to his general purpose, has suppressed all these genuinely human traits of weakness. He represents Jesus as calm, powerful, free from all fear and despondency. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." The last hour finds Jesus not prostrate on the earth, but erect in all his Godlike power. "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." It is the traitor and the soldiers who fall prostrate. Not a doubt presents itself to his mind. Not a prayer rises to God for the removal of the cup of his agony. "The cup my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" "The Prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me."

This picture, though at variance with the old and doubtless correct synoptic tradition, like all John's spiritual estimates of Jesus, contains a profound truth. It shows us the lofty resolution, the unbroken peace of mind, with which Jesus actually met his death. It does not tell us how he attained that peace. The older Gospels, however, tell us that He found it, as we may find it, amid sorrow and anguish we dare not say are

greater than his. He found it in prayer to God, in the thought that all is ordered by the Father's will, that, dark as the way appeared, fiercely as his human nature shrank from it, he would walk in it because God had shown him that it was the way of salvation.

And now I wish to compare Jesus' behavior with that of his disciples. For he did not go into that garden alone; he took with him his three oldest and most trusted friends, and them only. Why did he take them? Partly from that longing for human companionship and sympathy which even the greatest hearts have felt in moments of sorrow and deep despondency. Partly that they might be near him, because he would know God's will for them and help to prepare them for the fearful experiences which were about to come to them. He could not endure the presence even of the twelve at this awful moment, but he wanted those who were nearest to him. So we read: "He taketh with him Peter and James and John and began to be sore amazed and very heavy, and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death. Tarry ye here and watch. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee. Take away this cup from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt. And he cometh and findeth them sleeping and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst thou not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." Then, with divine

sweetness, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Disappointed, he withdrew unto himself. Then, driven back by the need of human help and sympathy, he returned "and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. Neither wist they what to answer him. And he cometh the third time and saith unto them, Sleep on now and take your rest; it is enough. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go. Behold, he that betrayeth me is at hand."

How full of lessons and of warning this story is! First, the need of human help and sympathy of those who are bearing great burdens and going through deep waters. At such times the heart of the strongest longs for support, at least for comprehension of what it suffers. Men turn naturally to those they love, looking for sympathy and for willingness to help them bear their anguish. And how seldom do they find it! How many friends we seem to have when we do not need them! How few when we have to put them to the proof! If Jesus had turned to the women who loved him and to whom he had given new life, at this hour they would not have slept, they would not have failed him. At all events, a day or two later, when he looked down from the height of his throne, his cross, searching the faces of the multitude for one friendly countenance, the only faces he saw turned toward him with affection were the faces of the women who followed him afar off. And if he reflected on the future of his religion he must have realized that woman's loyalty and

devotion was the rock on which his Church should rise.

And, most pathetic of all, his disciples failed him, not because they did not love him, but because they were so blind. In after years they were never tired of recounting their Master's heroic victory. But now they did not know there was a struggle. They had had a hard, exciting day; they were tired and wanted sleep. So they left Jesus to prepare for death alone.

Nor did Jesus take his disciples with him merely because he desired their company. He took them to prepare them for what was in store for them even as he prepared himself. The future was still obscure. It did not yet appear whether Jesus must suffer alone or whether the disciples must suffer with him. Perhaps his prayers and anguish were for them more than for himself. He knew, however, that in either case a fearful ordeal was in store for them. He foresaw the impending catastrophe, and he prepared to meet it with eyes wide open. It is true his human nature shuddered and his human will quailed in Gethsemane, but he fought the battle out before God. He conquered fear, and from that time onward, through all the fearful scenes of his betrayal, arrest, trial, mocking, torture, and crucifixion he shrank not and quailed not, but looked down upon his foes from the immeasurable height of his refuge in God.

Fortunately for his disciples, they were put to no such trial, for they were utterly unprepared for it, and even in the comparatively easy rôle they had to play

they miserably failed. Peter, after promising to go with his Master to prison and to death, trembled before the pitiful temple guard and denied all knowledge of the man, and he was totally invisible on the day of crucifixion. They were not prepared. They had let the opportunity slip. When they might have armed themselves with Jesus' courage, they slept, and when the storm burst they were swept away. The great event of their life came and they failed to meet it. So Jesus, coming to them the third time and finding them asleep, said to them, not without bitterness, "Sleep on now and take your rest." The opportunity is past, the time of preparation is ended. So far as I am concerned, you may sleep forever. "Sleep on and take your rest." You cannot help me now by watching. You cannot help yourselves. The hour for that is gone. Now the event must prove you. The time of preparation is over. The time of action is at hand. "Rise up, let us be going." Let us see how you and I will meet our fate.

We know how they met it. Jesus rising above the wonderful height of his own past to become the central and inviolable figure of humanity, the one perfect example of Godlike self-forgetfulness in human life; and they confused, bewildered, terrified, to sink beneath their own manhood, to fall from Jesus, the more despicably because of the example he had set them. This is what Robertson has called the Irrevocable Past. O human nature, so great and so little, so marvelous in thy calm courage and self-sacrifice when lifted up by

a great thought and sustained by a mighty purpose, so base and contemptible when taken by surprise and dominated by fear! In every event of life how wholly are we at the mercy of our own past! The great opportunity only proves what is in us. It does not supply what is not there. When a man challenged by some sudden emergency rises instantly to meet it, forgets himself, sacrifices his life to save another's, that divine self-forgetfulness was not created at that moment within his heart. It had long slumbered there, though he may not have known it. It had been formed by many a little act of courage and unselfishness. When a character suddenly crumbles and exhibits an unexpected and deplorable weakness, we may be sure before the great defeat came many lesser defeats had undermined its foundation and prepared the way for the final fall. "He that is faithful in the least is faithful also in much."

That is the real difference between great men and little men, between the men who truly succeed and the men who truly fail in life. To the first life is an opportunity, to realize which they are willing to make any sacrifice. To the second it is an enjoyment, a matter of personal ease and satisfaction to which all else must give way. The one invariably chooses the difficult way, since it is the way which leads to the greatest results. The other follows the fatal line of least resistance, since it gives the least trouble. The one lives for the future. He sees the end from the beginning and presses toward it. The other lives

wholly in the present, and he likes to think of the future as little as he likes to think of the past. Of all periods of life youth is the most important, because youth is the period when character is most plastic, when the ideal burns most brightly, when the heart is full of courage and generosity, and sacrifice is easy. What a man may gain or fail to gain between forty and fifty is of little importance in comparison with what the boy gains or fails to gain between ten and twenty. Then habits are formed and character is created and the whole bent is given to life which, with rare exceptions, continues to the end. So a noble and toiling youth is rarely followed by anything but a noble and affluent manhood. The stock of courage we then acquire is sufficient to sustain us to old age. And, on the other hand, how seldom is a wasted youth followed by anything but disappointment and sorrow! The strength which was not sufficient for light burdens is crushed by heavier burdens. The courage which flagged before the easy test when the boy was surrounded by sympathetic parents and teachers will not sustain him in the struggle with a hard and unfriendly world. The virtue which was corrupted early is apt to become vice in later years. He who has wasted this period of his existence has sustained an irreparable loss. Other things may intervene to make this less apparent, but he cannot become what it was once in his power to be.

What sorrow it must have caused the Disciples to the day of their deaths to remember how they failed Jesus in his hour of need! As the story of his passion and death

was recited endlessly in the churches, how they must have blushed and grieved to remember that in the night of his agony he had come to them for comfort and support three times and each time was disappointed!

The Disciples met their first great ordeal in Gethsemane, and they failed to rise to it. The great opportunity came to them and found them wanting. And though they afterward nobly redeemed themselves, yet that particular service, the blessed privilege of succoring Jesus in his hour of deep despondency and need, of standing beside him when he was condemned, of honoring him when he was mocked and spit upon, of bearing his cross up Calvary and of standing beneath it, so that his failing eye might rest at least on them with pride and satisfaction—all that was forever denied them. That lost opportunity no tears and no subsequent heroism could recover. We cannot deny it; he was both betrayed and denied and forsaken by his Disciples.

Jesus also met his ordeal in Gethsemane. He met it with an open eye and with a constant heart. Lost in the splendor of his thought and in the greatness of his undertaking, he forgot himself, and with perfect naturalness did a deed which has ever rightfully been regarded as the turning-point in the history of humanity. He rose to such magnanimity that he prayed for his persecutors and did not even reproach his followers for their cowardice. He took back his own saying, "He that is ashamed of me and of my words in this sinful and adulterous generation, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh with his holy

angels," and substituted for it, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He died with thoughts of love and salvation in his heart. They failed and he succeeded—succeeded because he forgot himself and all fear to do the will of God; succeeded because he had foreseen the hour, and because his whole life had been a preparation to meet it.

V

THE LORD'S SUPPER

And he said, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.—St. Luke xxii: 15, 16.

THESE words were spoken at the most solemn moment of Jesus' life. He had staked all on this appeal to the nation and he saw that it had failed. He had gone up to Jerusalem and had offered her his salvation with little doubt of the outcome. John the Baptist's bleeding head told him of his own fate. "They have done unto him what they listed." Yet he hardly needed a spirit from the dead to tell him this. He who, rejected by the people, stretched out his hand to seize Messiah's crown could hardly doubt the reception which Jerusalem, the grave of the Prophets, would accord him. If Bethsaida, Chorazin, and Capernaum had rejected him, what had he to hope from the city that stoneth the Prophets and killeth them that are sent unto her?

Leaving, then, the terrible problem of his personal fate in the hands of God, he must at once face the question, How can the Kingdom of God stand and continue

if the King, rejected and disowned, fall at the moment when he announces himself? We know the sad and terrible effect of this event upon those who loved him best, the scandal of his betrayal and death, which to all worldly wisdom involved his cause in certain ruin. How did Jesus meet this dreadful difficulty? He met it with an instinct of truth so profound that to this day we can only bow before it, without comprehending how he attained it. He saw that by his death he should attain that which he had not been able to attain by his life. He divined that he should serve humanity better by dying for it than by living for it, that "except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die it abideth alone." He declared in well-attested words that he would give his life a ransom for many.

Before the blow should fall Jesus had one great desire which God permitted him to fulfil. It was to take leave of his friends and to find a way by which they might forever realize his presence among them after he should be taken from them. So in the face of his own inward sadness and deep depression Jesus once more forgot himself to perform the most gracious act of his life. He who in life had done absolutely nothing to unite the citizens of the Kingdom of God gave this pledge of his love which soon his dying lips would not be able to utter. After supper, when the bitter herbs were dipped in the bowl and the paschal lamb was eaten, Jesus solemnly rises, breaks a piece of unleavened bread, and gives it to his Disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body." A little later he takes the cup and gives it to

them, saying, "Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sin." This is the whole mystery of the Eucharist as Christ ordained it and explained it—simple, spiritual, infinitely touching, as are all things that come from him.

First let us consider Jesus' purpose in choosing a symbolical act which we perform together as the Sacrament of his Church. In human life we see these two opposing tendencies, the private interests and experiences that we cannot share with others, and which therefore separate us, and the public interests and common acts and ideals and memories that unite us and make us a people. Without this last there is no such thing as a nation. Without common acts, ideals and memories which we cherish together a people may be a swarm, a barbarian horde, but it is not a nation. For a nation is a spiritual principle; and when these common ideals and purposes are forgotten and obscured by private interest the life of that nation is threatened. So all nations have sought out uniting symbols that should be to them the outward and visible sign of their national existence, and these symbols have exercised a strange and magical power over the lives and hearts of men. The flag becomes the sign of our country's life, its liberty and greatness. For the stars and stripes it carries men are willing to die. When we behold it floating on high and remember the fearful sacrifices that have been made to keep its honor untarnished and the hope of humanity that is sheltered by its broad folds our eyes grow dim, and the more that

flag is scarred by shot and shell and blackened by cannon-smoke the more men reverence it and the more willingly they follow it to death. Such an object ceases to be merely material. It is valued not for what it is, but for what it represents and suggests. The material thing becomes but the sign of our country's greatness and of the invisible ideals we cherish. It is the sacrament of our national life.

In our own experience how naturally do we invest material objects with the spirit and breath of our own life, the emotions we have felt in the use of them, or the associations they are able to recall. How many of us have had the experience of going back to the house in which our childhood was spent and have marveled at those eloquent walls, those speaking rooms, which fill our hearts with a flood of solemn and tender thoughts that we fancied were gone forever. The old house has passed into the hands of strangers, but it is ours in a sense in which it is not theirs. In its familiar recesses dwell the dear spirits of the past, invisible and inaudible to others, but visible and audible enough to us. There is the room in which your own dear children have lived and grown up. The furniture is old, but you have not cared to renew it since the birds have flown. The walls are disfigured with many marks where the children were measured. Why have you not obliterated them? That mirror is scratched with your diamond ring, but how many vanished faces look out of it wistfully striving to catch your eye! Especially do we prize those objects which remind us of our dead. Your mother's wedding-

ring is the sacred symbol of her patient life. The Bible she read for fifty years, marked in a thousand places by the hand long since crumbled into dust, is to you a holy book. Even those objects it gives us pain to behold we cannot utterly put from us. The mother lays carefully away the clothes of her lost child, the little shoes of the feet which ended their short journey long ago, the toys he loved, the little soldier who used to mount guard upon his pillow; and sometimes when she is alone she loves to take out these sacred objects and to look at them and touch them and weep over them. They have a kind of sacramental value like the flag, not for what they are, but for what they suggest. They are the keys which admit us to an old and vanished paradise. They are magic mirrors in which we can see scenes and faces we can see nowhere else.

So Jesus, in taking leave of his own, left behind him his sacrament to remind us of him, to unite us to him and to one another. Looked at from this point of view, it is all so simple, so perfectly natural, that we dread to see theology lay its coarse hands on it and to explain it further than Christ has explained it. Jesus had one great and dear belief which he embodied here: that death could not break the bond which united him to those who loved him, but that death would actually establish a new bond which would bring him nearer than of old; that, though his Disciples would no longer see him and hear him audibly speaking to them, they would have his presence in their hearts and in their lives. "Abide in me and I in you." "Lo, I am

with you alway even unto the end of the world." "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of you." Or, as he is purported to have said in a fragment of an old Gospel discovered in Egypt, "Split the wood and thou shalt find me; Cleave the rock, and I am there." It was as the constant reminder and pledge of this promise that he left us his sacrament on the night before his death. We know that this is true of all great souls. They live where they are doing their work. They are constantly incorporating themselves into the minds and lives of other men. While Goethe lived, hundreds of thousands of men carried in them living sparks of his soul. After death his influence became wider. But this is pre-eminently true of the spirit of Jesus. The one perfect example of a soul great enough to take possession of all mankind is Jesus Christ. He is the Vine, and we are the branches, the Vine from which we all hang like clustering grapes. Without this belief Christ would fade away into the mere memory of a god or man who trod this earth two thousand years ago. So many think of him merely as a departed being who once lived, but who long ago has disappeared into the great nether world of the dead, or is on his throne at God's right hand, far from the sphere of this world. We have Christ among us no more, we need him no more. We have his remains. We are living on the perfume of his broken vase and divide his inheritance among ourselves. The sayings and the treasures of faith, hope, and love which he left behind him are our inheritance, which

have taken his place and over which we strive and quarrel in his name. For them we are indebted to him, but only as to a man of the past. But him we have not. Why, then, is the inheritance ever growing? Why is it that the perfume of our broken vase is not evaporated? Because Christ has not left us, because he is with us still, invisibly present among us as God is present among us. Now he is not bound to one place. He goes up and down no more on weary feet of flesh, but from one end of the world to the other he goes on the light wings of the spirit. And Christ, who is present in so many events of our lives, is present here in a higher sense. When we think earnestly and lovingly of him he draws near to us. The more earnestly and lovingly we think the nearer he draws. We eat his flesh, indeed, in the sense in which we understand his spiritual body, when we unite our soul to his in the sacrament and consecrate ourselves anew to his service.

In the sacrament of Christ we also hold communion with one another. Jesus declared this plainly by making his sacrament a great fraternal meal. St. John identified it with the feeding of the multitude so fully as to make no other allusion to the institution of the Lord's Supper. The instinct of the animal is to eat alone. He seizes his food and withdraws to eat it in solitude. Man does not desire to eat alone. If he feels the need of fellowship at no other time, he feels it when he eats. To break bread with another and to eat his salt is regarded as a sign of friendship among all nations. Even a savage scorns to break bread with his enemy

unless he is first reconciled to him. So it has always been felt that hatred and enmity would break the bond of Christ's sacrament. So we are always bidden to come in love and charity to that feast, and those who are in enmity and hatred are warned to keep away, on the ground that they will eat and drink nothing but condemnation; for when the bond of love is broken the sacrament of Christ's death is invalidated. To make our fellowship plainer we actually consent to eat out of one plate and to drink out of one cup.

This much I presume is readily perceived. Among persons of education and refinement hatred and enmity, thank God, are not common. But the avoidance of them is but a shadow of the purpose and wish of Christ. What this Sacrament teaches, as far as our fellow-men are concerned, is that we shall be to them what Christ is to us; that as Christ has given all for us, we shall give all we have and are to others; that as he is constantly incorporating himself into us, so we should incorporate ourselves into other men, giving them constantly the best that is in us, which is divine life. If with this feeling of desire to draw near to Christ and through him to help men we approach the Sacrament, we shall fulfil his purpose, and we may have confidence that we shall be welcome guests. "Ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking henceforward in His holy ways, draw near with faith and take this Sacrament to your comfort."

VI

THE MYSTERY OF JESUS' DEATH[1]

For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.—St. Mark x: 45.

TO-DAY Christian believers are in a very peculiar position in regard to Jesus' death. In the Christian Church throughout the ages this act of Christ has ever been regarded as the central fact of his life, the rock on which his religion stands, an act of saving power and the beginning of new life for man. Modern thought, while rejecting all ancient theories of atonement, has by no means rejected the significance of the facts themselves. On the contrary, it ascribes to them an eternal significance, since they gave us the one inviolable figure of humanity and transformed his movement from a short-lived Jewish school of ethical culture into a world religion. If it has rejected the ancient theories of atonement it has done so either because they were historically untenable or morally inadequate. To-day it seems as if the veil of mystery which shrouds the Cross of Christ would never again be lifted. It seems to be the will of God that these facts—

[1] The argument and many of the statements of this study are taken from Schweitzer's *Skizze*, the most important contribution to the life of Jesus produced in our generation. A translation by the Rev. Walter Lowrie will soon appear.

the holiest which our earth has ever witnessed—should produce forever their impression on the human heart without much help from our interpretations and explanations. Two things are certain; we cannot revive the old interpretations and cause them again to minister to the higher life of man; neither can we be content with the denials and paltry explanations of modern rationalism which sees in Jesus' death only the highest example of ministering love, for the facts are so much greater. And if theology sinks exhausted before the stupendous height of the facts pertaining to the death of Christ, criticism has not proved itself better able to rise to them. Most of the great critical lives of Jesus are fairly satisfactory up to a certain point. That point invariably is the period of his life when the thought of death first arose in Jesus' mind immediately after the confession of Simon Peter. From this point on the critics grope in thick darkness and proceed with uncertain steps. They tell us of growing opposition and growing discouragement, of the painful effect produced by the execution of John the Baptist, of vacillation and hurried flights, of the unwilling abandonment of his old vocation of prophet and teacher, and the sudden fatal determination to stretch forth his hand to seize Messiah's crown. All inadequate, conjectural, and for the most part false.

The reason of this inability to write the last great chapter of our Saviour's life is the failure or the unwillingness of all these authors to grasp the motives and the intentions which led up to it. They have sought the

explanations in changed circumstances, in failure and opposition, whereas the change of program came solely from Jesus himself, from the new perception of Jesus of the necessity for his death and his deliberate intention of ushering in the Kingdom of God by dying. Up to a certain moment in Jesus' life there is no recorded allusion to his death. From this point on the necessity of dying is constantly on our Saviour's mind and on his lips. Any real and historical explanation of the meaning of Christ's death must therefore proceed from his consciousness and ask first, Why did Jesus feel the necessity of a voluntary surrender of his life? and secondly, What did he expect to attain by his death? If we ever decipher this mystery we shall do so only under the guidance of Christ himself.

There can be no question that Jesus laid down his life voluntarily. He set his face to go to Jerusalem, expecting and intending to die there, and he made no effort to escape. His death was not the result of misunderstanding or of the opposition of men and the failure of his own cause. It was his own voluntary act, a purpose to which he came after the most profound and careful thought. Any one reading the story of the trial and knowing what he was can see he intended it. Nor is it questionable that Jesus himself attached a saving power to his death. He died for others. In one of his most tremendous and genuine sayings he declared, "For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a

ransom for many."[1] Yet this offering was made, not with the thought of disarming the anger of a God whom Jesus conceived as a God of love, not that God could not, would not otherwise forgive our sins, for he himself declared God's everlasting willingness to forgive, and he taught us confidently to pray for forgiveness, without any sacrifice or expiation, even as we forgive those who trespass against us.

The reason why it is so difficult to understand Christ's motive and purpose in dying is that he himself was so reticent in regard to it. At a certain definite

[1] This saying is contained in St. Mark's Gospel (x: 45). Since Jesus here definitely announces not only the voluntary surrender of his life, but the redeeming power of his death, critics, almost without exception, have missed this golden guiding thread, and have set themselves to void these words of all authenticity and significance. Such a saying, they assert, could not have emanated from Jesus at this time. It is an afterthought ascribed to him by St. Mark, who had learned the doctrine of the atoning sacrifice of Christ's death from St. Paul. Paul, therefore, is the real author of this saying, or at least of this thought. Fortunately, we are in a position to judge of this for ourselves. St. Paul (in I Corinthians xi) in describing the significance of Jesus' death in connection with the Sacrament, according to an old tradition which he says he received from the Lord, makes use of a different expression which is incorporated with a modification from Mark into the later Gospels. He says, "*My body which is given for you.*" In other words, he is writing from the point of view of the congregation of Christian believers for whom Christ died. St. Mark, however, doubtless repeating the exact words of Jesus, which later became incomprehensible, represents Jesus as saying, "The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many," not the congregation of believers, but an indeterminate multitude. This was not taken from St. Paul. On the contrary, the point of view antedates Paul's point of view altogether, and goes back to a time when as yet there was no congregation of believers. This saying therefore must be regarded as an authentic saying of Christ, the oldest which we possess on this subject, and the only theory of the significance of Jesus' death which can be regarded as historical is that which can explain what these words mean, "And to give his life a ransom for many."

time of his ministry, after the confession of Peter, he informed his disciples of the necessity of his suffering. Before that time he had not mentioned it; afterward he spoke of it constantly. Yet he did not tell them what had led him to this resolution. One other remark must be made. There is so much that is un-Jewish, timeless, and therefore modern in Jesus' character and teaching that we are apt to imagine it is all modern and to set aside and ignore all those elements of his life and thought which do not adjust themselves to our present way of thinking. But therein we make a mistake, and the result of our violent wrenching of his personality from the setting of his earthly life and from the world of thought in which he grew up has been to blur the fineness and originality of his thought, to rob him of his inherent force and energy, and to represent him finally as merely resigned in the great crisis which he himself sought with all the power of his will. Perfectly original as he was, timeless as to his own thought and teaching, he never rejected the religious hopes and beliefs of his people. His religious life was nourished on the books and characters of the Old Testament. He derived all his early beliefs from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, the Psalms, the minor prophets, which he constantly quoted. Though the ceremonial and legal aspects of Judaism repelled him, its mystical and spiritual elements powerfully attracted him, especially the great world of thought and expectation which grew up around the conception of Messiah, and Messiah's Kingdom was the world in which he lived. No man,

no matter how great, can be judged or understood apart from the beliefs and influences under which he has lived. Had Christ been born in Athens, or had he grown up beneath the oaks of England, that circumstance would doubtless have tinged his genius and have given another form to his mission. Born, or at least reared, in Galilee, at a time when all men's hearts were pondering the great Messianic problem, this was the form under which life was revealed to him.

Jesus, for example, understood, and all his hearers understood, by the Kingdom of God something quite different from what we understand to-day, if indeed we understand anything. He did not mean by the Kingdom of God the foundation of a society of believers in a church or the mere struggle after a perfect life. He meant something definite, concrete, the end of this old world, the sudden coming of God in judgment and to usher in an eternal Kingdom of righteousness, a belief which haunted the prophets, especially Daniel, and which on account of the mighty preaching of the Baptist was perfectly understood by the people at that time. Nor did he think of that Kingdom as a distant event belonging to the dim illimitable future. He prayed, "Thy kingdom come," and when he began to preach his first words were, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

It was a wide-spread belief of the Jews that when the people repented and turned to God, the Kingdom would come. John the Baptist had preached and the people had repented, hence he believed that the

Kingdom was at hand; hence the immense importance he attached to John, going so far as to be baptized himself, and to call John the greatest born of woman, because by him the Kingdom had been brought near. Before John the prophets had prophesied merely, but since John the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence and the violent lay hold of it—*i. e.*, compel it to come, an important passage which for the first time receives an interpretation. When he sent out his Disciples it was to make the final announcement. He believed that before they returned the great event might take place. So he bade them make haste, to carry no baggage, and to salute no man by the way. "Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. And as ye go, preach and say the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come." "There be some standing here who shall not taste of death until they see the Kingdom of God come with power."[1]

[1] After the first preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom in Galilee Jesus sent forth his Disciples to finish the work which he had begun. He constrained them to make haste, to impede themselves with nothing save a staff only, no script, no bread, no money, but to be shod with sandals and not to take two coats. He bade them not to turn aside. They went forth and preached, and their preaching was believed, and they returned to Jesus accompanied by a great multitude estimated at not fewer than five thousand persons who confidently looked for the coming of the Kingdom. With them Jesus celebrated the great Supper on the shore of Gennesaret which has come down to us as the feeding of the five thousand. It is plain, however, that this was no ordinary meal, the satisfaction of hunger and thirst, but a symbolic and sacramental act, the great Messianic supper which should precede the coming of the Kingdom, and which was repeated in more solemn form and under more definite and awful figures on the last

Of this Kingdom he regarded himself as King. There can be no question that this conviction came to him at the beginning of his ministry and caused his ministry. But in this sense Messiah and Messiah's Kingdom belong together. The tragedy of Jesus' life lay in the fact that Messiah appeared before his Kingdom; that he came, but the Kingdom, in the sense in which he understood it, did not come. This also was an ancient belief. It was said in the Talmud that Messiah shall be in the world unknown, unsuspected. So St. John says: "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not." The difference between St. John and the Synoptists is that St. John consistently represents Jesus as already Messiah on earth, whereas they represent him as the one designated by God to be Messiah in the Kingdom when it comes. So he regarded himself, and for this reason he said so little about his Messiahship that men have denied that he accepted the rôle at all. It was his secret with God which men did not need to know, since when the Kingdom came it would be revealed. He did not divulge this even to his Disciples until Simon Peter had divined it and confessed it, as Jesus said, "not because flesh and blood (*i.e.*, he himself) had revealed

night of Jesus' life. The proof of this is to be found in the Gospel of St. John, who identifies the feeding of the five thousand so entirely with the sacrament that he makes no other mention of the institution of the Lord's Supper, and represents Jesus as here speaking unreservedly of giving his flesh to be eaten and his blood to be drunk: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood ye have no life in you."

it to him, but the Father in Heaven." That is the meaning of the Transfiguration when he whom his Disciples had followed only as their Teacher and Friend stood before them in a new and heavenly light. Even then he solemnly pledged them not to divulge his secret to any one: "And he commanded them to tell no man."

We are accustomed to think that when John the Baptist sent his Disciples to Jesus to ask, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" he meant, "Art thou the Christ?" But here again we are certainly mistaken. It was universally believed that before Christ came the great prophet Elijah would appear among men, according to the saying of Malachi, "Behold, I will send unto you the prophet Elias before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord." When John the Baptist heard in prison of the mighty deeds of Jesus he thought that he might be that prophet, as the form of his question indicates, for "He that should come" was understood to be Elias, not Christ. The alternative John proposed to Jesus was a false alternative, to which Jesus would not answer Yes or No, and the reason why John did not regard Jesus as the Christ was that he did not regard himself as Elias the forerunner. "And this is the answer of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? and he confessed and denied not, but confessed, I am not the Christ; and they said, What art thou? Art thou Elias? and he said I am not. Art thou that prophet? and he answered, No." Jesus, however, recognizing Christ in himself,

recognizes Elias in John. Hence, instead of answering John's question he told John's Disciples simply to report to their master what they had found him to be. "Go and tell John again the things ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Such acts as these are not the acts of the forerunner, but of the Messiah himself. So Jesus declared to the people immediately afterward in speaking of John, "And if ye will receive it this is Elias which was to come"; and again to his Disciples when they asked, "How say the Scribes that Elias must first come?" "I say unto you that Elias is come already, and that they have done unto him what they listed."

One other thought of the deepest significance to Jesus' destiny was the universal expectation that the Kingdom of God would be ushered in with fearful signs and by terrible affliction to the world. From ancient times the prophets had foretold the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, when the sun should be darkened and the moon turned to blood. The elaborate and fearful pictures of the Book of Revelation show the profound effect this belief had produced on the popular imagination. The Talmud contains curious passages to the same effect. It will be a time of fearful catastrophes of nature, when every year shall bring its particular plague. Israel shall sink to the lowest depths of unbelief. The noblest men shall wander like outcasts from city to city, finding

grace and acceptance nowhere. The holiest ties shall be dissolved. Children shall mock their parents and fathers shall betray their children, and before Messiah comes all hope of his coming shall have vanished from the earth. In the light of his expectation we can understand Jesus' terrible warnings of the destruction of the Temple and of the signs that shall usher in his coming: "Take heed that no man deceive you." "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars and fearful signs and great earthquakes." "Let him that is on the housetop not come down to fetch anything out of his house." "In that day two men shall be in the field. One shall be taken, and the other left." "And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter." "For this shall be a great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world, no, nor shall be, and except those days shall be shortened there shall no flesh be saved, but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."[1] It is this fearful thought which casts its shadow over every page of the New Testament. The thought of future suffering is never absent from it. Even the Beatitudes close with "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad." The greater the tribulation, the nearer your reward. "When these things shall come to pass, then look up and lift up your

[1] Although these apocalyptic warnings were greatly elaborated by the Synoptic Evangelists, there can be no doubt that they have a solid nucleus in Jesus' authentic teaching. In John's Gospel they are allowed to fall altogether, because at the time he wrote this point of view had passed away.

heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." Even the Lord's Prayer, which is almost wholly taken up with the coming Kingdom, ends with the solemn prayer that we may not be brought to that trial, but delivered from the coming evil: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." So in the mind of Christ the thought of suffering was never absent. At first it was the suffering of all that haunted him. Then, in some way inscrutable to us, the thought arose in him that he might suffer in our stead, that he might take upon himself all the suffering of the world and bear it alone, giving his life a ransom for many and ushering in the Kingdom without any period of fearful woe for the earth. How this wonderful thought came he did not divulge. If we may presume to offer an opinion it would seem from meditation on the writing of the second Isaiah. At all events, he found it in the Scriptures, for he said, "How it is written of the Son of Man that he must suffer many things and be set at naught." Isaiah describes such an one as he actually was—the perfect servant of God, led like a lamb to the slaughter —a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He describes him as one who was not disobedient and who poured out his soul unto death, an object of derision and despite, the mock of sinners, pierced, insulted, spat upon, and finally put to death. "He had no beauty that we should desire him"; his countenance was marred beyond all human recognition. And yet even among these malefactors there dawned the perception that this man was not as themselves, but that

in some mysterious way he was there as their representative, suffering what otherwise they would have suffered. "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgression; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him and by his stripes we are healed." And Isaiah conceives that through such a one God will create a new heaven and a new earth. To him it is a little thing to bring Jacob and gather together the outcasts of Israel. "The Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising"; and through the sacrifice of his death a new world shall come into being. This is the wonderful thought which Jesus embraced and enacted. For whomever it was intended by the prophet, Jesus gave this thought life by transferring it to himself. So the greatest thought of the Old Testament and the greatest deed of the New Religion are for the first time brought into their true relation. And in order that he might fulfil this prophecy the nature of his act must be kept secret, or the Scripture would not be fulfilled. He must enact the divine drama as God had appointed. He must remain unknown, undiscovered. Men must remain in ignorance of him. Sinners must have their way with him. They must wreak their fury on him and kill him in ignorance of what they are doing in order that he may offer an atonement for them and save the world the indescribable suffering it would otherwise have to endure. Therefore he could excuse his Dis-

ciples when they forsook him, and pray for his murderers on the ground of their ignorance. Truly they knew not what they did. In the hand of God they were the blind instruments of salvation. Once only did the mighty purpose waver—in the darkest hour, before death began to cast its merciful anodyne over his senses, he complained that he had been deceived, that God had forsaken him. Yet he died declaring that his work was done: "It is finished," and this, his last saying, gains new definiteness.

One thing more: Jesus at first seems to have expected that the Kingdom would come in his lifetime. His preaching began with "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." He sent out his Disciples to make the last announcement of the coming Kingdom and assured them that the Kingdom would overtake them on their way. They had preached and the people had believed, and more than five thousand of them had followed the Disciples back to Jesus, and he had celebrated with them the great Messianic supper which has come down to us as The Feeding of Five Thousand. In other words, the preparations were complete and yet the Kingdom came not. Why did it tarry? What more could he do to make it come? Then the new thought arose—he must die to usher it in. He, whom God had designated as Messiah and King, must go to the eternal world to meet the Kingdom and return with it: hence the innumerable promises of his return in the clouds of Heaven; hence the faith of the early Church, impossible to understand on any other hypothesis,

that Jesus would soon return bringing the Kingdom with him, and that this return would mark the end of the world.

What actually brought Jesus to the cross at last was the betrayal of his secret by Judas Iscariot. The abhorrence in which Judas is held by every writer of the New Testament convinces us that his was no common crime. Yet until recently none has been able to say what his crime actually was. It was but a slight service for Judas to point out to the Temple guard the spot where Jesus spent his last night on earth. Jesus took no elaborate precautions to conceal his whereabouts, and if the chief priests desired to know it all they had to do was to send their detectives to follow him and find out. What Judas betrayed was, not where Jesus spent the night merely, but the great Messianic secret until then so jealously guarded. What Caiaphas wanted was not merely to lay hands on Jesus, a task which he was quite competent to perform: it was a capital indictment before the supreme court of the nation, which would result in a public execution, for he dared attempt the life of the great Prophet of Galilee in no other way; and this he could obtain only from a personal Disciple, for Jesus had taken none other into his confidence. This appears plainly in the trial. At first Caiaphas tried to convict him by witnesses, and failed. They knew only a few garbled extracts from his public teaching: "Yea, though they brought many false witnesses, yet could they not agree." Caiaphas saw his victim escaping. Then he

played his last card, using the information he had obtained from Judas. Rising, he solemnly accosts Jesus, and, putting him on oath, he asks a new question: "I adjure thee by the living God, tell me if thou be Christ the Son of God." Thus interrogated and knowing all that it meant, Jesus instantly confessed it, and as solemnly rehearsed his full claim to Caiaphas. "Thou hast said it, and henceforth thou shalt see the Son of Man seated on the right hand of Power and coming in the clouds of Heaven." This was enough: "What need we of any further witnesses? Behold, ye have heard his blasphemy, what think ye? They all cried out, he is worthy of death." So was the Scripture fulfilled. So we can see why from this point on Jesus made no defense, no attempt to save his life. He died of his own determinate purpose to fulfil the Scriptures, to save the world from coming evil; and he did save the world in an even deeper sense than he anticipated. To him his death was but one step, an episode in the divine tragedy. To us it is the central fact in the history of the world, the eternal source from which our higher life flows.

VII

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

KEIM begins his classical discussion of the Resurrection of Jesus with these words: "The history of every human life ends at the grave. It is an axiom of ancient and modern times that the dead do not rise. The elder Pliny finds a melancholy consolation for all the weaknesses of men in the thought that not even God can wake the dead. . . . Tradition makes a difference in the case of Jesus. To him there was deliverance from death upon the earth itself. . . . This tradition has been vigorously attacked from the beginning until now by Jews and heathen and at last by Christians also. Formerly the attack was prompted by hatred, now by love of truth." It is safe to say that since these words were penned no such acute discussion of every phase of the question has appeared. Biblical science and psychology have developed far beyond Keim's standpoint in 1871, but no man has discussed this problem from so many sound points of view or with such refined subtlety as Theodor Keim in the last volume of his *Jesus of Nazara.*

Of the four latest investigators, Oscar Holzmann, Schmiedel, Sanday, and Dobschütz, the first two appear

to reject all reality of fact and to content themselves with supplying plausible motives. Of all these Schmiedel is by far the most learned, painstaking and ingenious. His treatment of the resurrection,[1] however, is too exclusively critical and literary, and his psychological explanation lacks the simplicity and brilliancy of Renan's. All that he claims for his argument is "The possibility, the probability if you will, of the explanation from subjective visions." Holzmann displays a very half-hearted interest in the subject, and contents himself with tracing a plausible psychological development in the series of visions recorded in I Corinthians which he seems inclined to refer to mental suggestions, and dismisses the subject. Sanday, as Canon Henson complains, gives the impression of shrinking from the real question, and his analysis of the facts is so slight that it is difficult to see wherein he has advanced the discussion. Dobschütz in his interesting little monograph, "Ostern and Pfingsten," concerns himself chiefly with the empty grave and the appearance to the five hundred brethren which he identifies with the manifestation of the Spirit at Pentecost. Lastly, light has sprung up from an unexpected quarter in the posthumous work of Frederick Myers, to whom I shall revert later.

Whatever our predilection, however stanch our faith, educated men to-day recognize that this fortress is not to be taken by storm. To think to find a smooth and easy way to certainty in this matter, as Keim says, is a

[1] "Resurrection and Ascension Narratives," *Encyclopædia Biblica.*

mistake unworthy of a thoughtful, truth-loving man. To attain even a reasonable probability requires the sober employment of all our faculties and, above all, good temper. It is true the resurrection of Jesus is next to the best attested fact in Gospel history. It is also true that the testimony on which the fact rests swarms with inconsistencies and mutually canceling particulars. More than a century ago Lessing complained of "the more than ten contradictions." Subsequent criticism has added to their number.[1] According to one account, the resurrection took place at the end of the Sabbath, on Saturday afternoon; according to others, on Sunday morning. It was accompanied by an earthquake, and occurred by the aid and in the presence of either one or two angels, sitting or standing, within or without the tomb. The person of Jesus is first met by one, two, or three Galilean women, or by one of the Apostles. According to some accounts, Jesus appeared to his Disciples in Galilee; according to other accounts, in Jerusalem. In St. Matthew, women held him by the feet. In St. John, Mary is forbidden to touch him. According to some reports, Jesus possessed a tangible, material body which permitted him to eat and drink. According to others, he appeared and disappeared, passed through closed doors, and was not recognized by those who knew him until their eyes had been supernaturally opened. According to some, he was seen only once; according to others, several times.

[1] Schmiedel appends an interesting table illustrating the variations of the narratives. Here I give the more important of those mentioned by Keim.

Finally, he left the earth either on the very day of his resurrection or forty days later on a Thursday, instead of Sunday, or he was already in heaven when he gave his last greeting to his Disciples. Difficulties like these demand, if not absolute resignation, at least patience and moderation. And this is the evidence on which belief in Christ's resurrection rests!

Our oldest witnesses are, and until the date of the Apocalypse is determined will be, the last chapter of St. Mark's Gospel as far as the eighth verse and the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians. St. Mark merely describes the empty grave and the young man clothed in white who announces the resurrection and commands the women to inform the Disciples and Peter that they shall see their Master in Galilee. The women, we are told, departed from the sepulcher troubled and amazed, "neither said they anything to any man, for they were affrighted." It is hard to believe that this vivid and realistic Gospel closed in so unsatisfactory a manner. Accordingly we hear of a "lost conclusion" of Mark which was allowed to fall because of its inconsistency with other later Gospels. Many attempts have been made to restore this lost ending. The most plausible conjecture is that it described a meeting of Jesus and his Apostles on the Sea of Galilee, which the author of the fourth Gospel made use of in drawing the exquisite picture of his twenty-first chapter, which does not fit into the general frame-work of this Gospel, but is added as a kind of appendix. Harnack and Rohrbach assume this, although they also discover traces of Mark's

conclusion in the recently discovered Gospel of Peter. From these conjectures, however, nothing can be established. The one certain point of this most ancient Gospel record is that it points to Galilee, not to Jerusalem, as the scene of the resurrection appearances.

The best evidence is still St. Paul. Recent criticism has endeavored to shake the authenticity of I Corinthians, which even Baur spared—but, as Schmiedel confesses, "on what slender grounds!" In fact, it would be safe to say that even if the first Epistle to the Corinthians should be proved to be of later date and by another hand, its statement of resurrection appearances, which differs so radically from others, must be allowed to stand, since after the Gospel accounts had been promulgated it would never have been invented. Often as the evidential value of the passage has been stated, I must once more briefly indicate it. The usual date assigned to this Epistle is the year 55, but the words of Paul, "I delivered unto you first of all," carry us back about four years further to his first visit to Corinth; and finally the expression, "that which I also received," can refer to nothing but the tradition delivered to him by the earliest Apostles and first Christians during his two weeks' visit to Peter in Jerusalem, described in Galatians as taking place three years after Paul's conversion, or about the year 35. Here, then, we have direct, unadulterated tradition from the earliest times. There is no doubt Paul intended this list to be complete and correctly ordered. The Corinthian heretics' denial of the resurrection in

general, which seemed to him to carry with it denial of the resurrection of Jesus, compelled him to look carefully to his historical evidences. Paul was prepared to stake the whole truth of the Christian religion on this one fact. All the more necessary, therefore, was it for him to establish it on an impregnable foundation. The measured sobriety of his language, the strict limitation of the appearances of the Risen One, his careful mention of names, the psychological probability of his sequence, his rigid exclusion of all legendary, highly colored incidents, all produce an impression most favorable to his truthfulness and to his painstaking care.[1] Nor was this category of resurrection appearances hastily constructed for the occasion. It appears to be, as Paul himself describes it, a *Kerygma*, a definite formula received from the old Disciples and which he habitually employed. This formula is as follows:

That Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures,
And that He was buried,
And that He rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures,
And that He appeared to Cephas,
Then to the Twelve,
Afterward He appeared to above five hundred brethren at once of whom the majority are still alive, but some sleep.
Afterward He appeared to James,
Then to all the Apostles.
Last of all as to an untimely birth He appeared also to me.

In all, six appearances, neither more nor less.

Before subjecting this testimony of Paul to a closer

[1] Keim.

examination it is necessary to cast a brief glance over the records of the Evangelists. In all four of our Gospels the discovery of the resurrection, or, rather, of the empty tomb, was made by one or other of the Galilean women who had repaired to the grave, as is expressly stated in the first three Gospels, for the pious purpose of embalming the body to retard the processes of dissolution. In all the Gospels the announcement is made by an angel or by angels or by a young man in white clothing. In Matthew and Mark the Disciples are pointed to Galilee and are ordered to repair thither, where they are promised a sight of their risen Master. In Luke and John this old and doubtless true tradition is allowed to fall, and Jesus makes his appearances immediately in Jerusalem, and yet a reminiscence of the earlier tradition is preserved. In Luke it is softened to, "Remember how he spoke unto you when he was yet in Galilee." In John it reappears in the last meeting by the Sea of Tiberias. In the Acts of the Apostles the command to depart to Galilee is actually changed to a command not to depart from Jerusalem.

Further, as we pass from earlier to later sources we observe a marked tendency to materialize the body of the Risen One and a disposition to draw him more and more into the sphere of mundane life. St. Matthew describes the meeting on an unnamed mountain in Galilee, and relates a brief farewell discourse of Jesus with his Disciples, but refrains from attempting to describe the body of Jesus, makes no mention of eating, of physical contact except by the women, or of other cor-

poreal acts. St. Luke describes repeated eating and drinking, a display of wounded members, an invitation to the Disciples to assure themselves of the reality of flesh and bones. St. John, while refraining from saying that Jesus actually partook of food himself, represents him as offering food to the Disciples and as inviting Thomas not only to touch him, but to thrust his hand into his wounds. It is here the contradictions, inconsistencies, and grave difficulties begin to oppress us. To deny them or to think to reconcile them simply exposes a man to ridicule and contempt. In the face of the sore trials that beset us on every side it is not wonderful that some take refuge in complete denial and others in a faith that finds support in general religious and philosophic considerations and asks no aid of stubborn, intractable facts. Let us consider our difficulties one by one if we cannot remove them, beginning with the empty grave. Schmiedel, following Keim, both in his article on the Resurrection and in that on the Gospels in *Cheyne's Encyclopædia*, dismisses the empty sepulcher as an unhistorical figment. The arguments he adduces are St. Paul's silence and the assertion of St. Mark that the women, terrified and affrighted, told no man of the young man's message. This he considers an admission that the empty grave was not at first a motive for belief in the resurrection of Christ, but was added later—too late for verification to be possible. In this case we must reject the women's visit to the grave altogether, for if the women had visited the grave for the purpose of embalming the

body and had carried out their purpose the story of the empty grave could hardly have arisen. But this episode is so embedded in all four Gospels, it is introduced with such transparent good faith, the motive of the women is so natural, the moral effect produced by their discovery still stands out so plainly, that to suppose the whole episode the invention of a later age to bolster up belief in Christ's resurrection is very improbable. The very confusion that the four Gospels exhibit as to the number and names of the women speaks for the good faith of the episode. Although I would by no means assert that without the empty grave belief in the Lord's resurrection would not have arisen, I affirm that without it this belief would have taken another form than that which we find in the New Testament.

As to St. Paul, is it so certain, after all, that he knew nothing of an empty grave? In his *Kerygma* we find these words: "That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, and that he rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures." Remember that Paul did not invent these words; they were part of the original tradition he received. And that Paul attached some mystical meaning to the burial of Christ we know from the passage in Romans (vi: 4) where he speaks of our being buried with him by baptism into death in order that, being planted together in the likeness of his death, we may be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Moreover, what meaning did Paul attach to the expression, "He

rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures"? What Scripture was thus fulfilled? Are we to refer it to Isaiah's promise to Hezekiah in the second book of Kings (xx: 5), "I will heal thee; on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord"? Or shall we remind ourselves of Hosea's "After two days will he revive us, and the third day he will raise us up"? Or shall we think of Jonah's three days and three nights in the whale's belly which St. Matthew (xii: 40) so misinterpreted? To tell the truth, none of these passages has any application to the resurrection of Christ. We know not what "Scripture" of the Old Testament was thus fulfilled. We are therefore led to think of the Lord's own prognostication of his death recorded in the Gospels, but what is peculiar here, as Dobschütz observes, is that Jesus spoke invariably of the lapse of three days, not of the third day.

Let us consider a final expedient. Jesus was buried on Friday afternoon. All our accounts agree that on Sunday morning the grave was found empty by women. A day had intervened. It was therefore the third day. Is not this the origin of the ancient formula quoted by St. Paul, "He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures"? Paul distinguishes sharply between Christ's resurrection and his subsequent appearances. Does not even in Paul the mention of a third day point to the empty grave? In admitting this I am exposing myself to additional difficulties I would gladly avoid, but I cannot deny it. If any portion of the Gospel tradition of Christ's resurrection is true, it is that his grave was

visited early on Easter morning and was found empty. Here, however, following St. Mark, we may believe the tradition ends. The women saw nothing but an empty grave. The angels to which the faith of the early Church so easily appealed have ceased to befriend us. Whatever impetus, support, corroboration the knowledge of the empty grave afforded later belief, faith in Christ's resurrection did not spring from an empty grave, but from appearances of the Risen One.

1. *The Scene of the Appearances*

As to the scene of Christ's appearances our task is not so difficult. All our older sources point to Galilee, not to Jerusalem. "After I am raised up I will go before you into Galilee," said Jesus in Matthew and Mark.[1] "Lo he goeth before you into Galilee," said the angel in Matthew. "Go tell his disciples and Peter he goeth before you into Galilee," said the young man in Mark. And this meeting Matthew punctually reports as taking place on a mountain in Galilee. St. Paul, it is true, mentions no locality, but the appearance to the five hundred brethren at once, unless we identify this event with the Day of Pentecost, must have occurred in Galilee, since the Lord had not at that time so many faithful followers in Jerusalem. St. Luke, indeed, confines the appearances of Jesus to Jerusalem and its environment; but that apparently is because he represents all Christ's manifestations as taking place

[1] Mark xiv: 28; Matthew xxvi: 32.

on Easter Day, and he depicts the final ascension as occurring at Bethany on Sunday night. There was no time, therefore, for a withdrawal to Galilee. St. John, while describing the appearances as beginning at Jerusalem, in his twenty-first chapter has presented the reminiscence that the Disciples had returned to their home and their fishing, and represents the last appearance as taking place on the old familiar lake. Between these alternatives we cannot hesitate. The synoptic Gospels show not only that the Disciples were absent on the way to death and from the cross, but that they had scattered and fled. Matthew and Mark, our oldest Gospel sources, speak unqualifiedly for Galilee. The shifting of the scene to Jerusalem is already comprehensible in St. Luke, who wished to conclude his story and to crowd the whole stupendous transaction into one day (although he was obliged to expand that day into forty days in the Acts of the Apostles). St. John's preference for Jerusalem we may regard as part of the general scheme of his Gospel. But that the appearances of Jesus having taken place at Jerusalem should afterward have been shifted to Galilee to satisfy no apparent motive is inconceivable. The plain fact that underlies the command of the angels is that the Disciples had left Jerusalem and had returned to Galilee, where their meetings with Jesus took place. At all events, we must recognize that the same persons were not at the same time in both places, and, though we may not feel warranted in accepting St. Paul's list as the only genuine revelations to the exclusion of all

others (*e.g.*, that of Emmaus), yet we must recognize that this fact does cut deep into several of the detailed accounts of meetings in Jerusalem simply because the Apostles were not there. With this admission I feel myself excused from examining in detail the number and order of Christ's appearances. St. Paul says expressly that the first revelation was made to Peter. With this St. Mark and St. Luke substantially agree. The duration of the appearances is also impossible to determine. St. Paul places his own vision of the Risen One, which occurred several years after the Crucifixion, on a parity with the other appearances. I do not know why the vision of Stephen, if it occurred as it is described in the Acts of the Apostles, should not be placed in the same category. As soon as we pass from the New Testament to Apocryphal literature we encounter a new series of grosser, more materialistic representations which in some instances—*e.g.*, the Gospel of Peter and that according to the Hebrews—may contain perversions of good and ancient literature.

2. *The Character of the Appearances*

In regard to the nature of Christ's body we must admit that Christian tradition also wavers. The Gospels speak of his sudden appearance and disappearance, of his passing through closed doors. They admit that he was not recognized even by those to whom he revealed himself, and they do not once pretend that he was visible to the unbelieving world. The

pseudo conclusion of St. Mark asserts that he showed himself to the two who walked into the country "in another form." Yet it is plain that in spite of these ancient traditions the Evangelists themselves conceived of Jesus as possessing a material or quasi-material body. Even in Matthew the women held him by the feet. St. Luke goes further in representing Jesus as possessing actual flesh and bones and as eating in the presence of his Disciples. St. John repeats these incidents. Moreover, the Gospels represent Jesus as talking and as holding long conversations with his Disciples, expounding the Scriptures, etc. It is here that the doctrine of the Resurrection weighs most heavily upon the conscience of educated men to-day. Here it becomes no glad reassurance of faith, but a burden which, if the heart accepts, the intellect rejects. Such a resurrection establishes no new bond of hope between Christ and the believer; it separates us from Christ, for we know well that no such fate is in store for us. To the common Jewish conception such a resurrection presented no difficulties. In fact, the only resurrection they could conceive of was a physical resurrection, a return to bodily life. If they believed Jesus to have risen at all, their belief eventually must have taken this form. Herod, when he heard of Jesus, imagined that it was John the Baptist risen from the dead, while the people took him for Moses or Elias or one of the prophets. But we judge differently. Whatever hope we have of an eternal life does not carry with it the resuscitation of this perishing frame with its

material organs. My faith in the Resurrection of Jesus is not strengthened by the fact that he is described as able to eat, drink, show his wounds, sit, stand, and walk on weary feet. It is only embarrassed by these representations, since all these things belong to the old life which ends at death. It is our insistence on these material details that has awakened the suspicion and aversion of men and that has caused even believers to stumble. Moreover, no sooner do these writers find themselves with a material body on their hands than they are obliged to dematerialize it again, to pass with uncertain steps from eating and drinking and tangible contacts to invisibility and the suspension of resistance and gravity. Is this, then, the only alternative presented to the believer—a material physical resurrection or open denial? We have yet to consider the oldest, the most philosophical conception of all, that of St. Paul in I Corinthians.

In reading St. Paul's category of the Resurrection appearances of Jesus every reader must be struck by the sober, measured, parsimonious use of words, by the absence of all sensuous description, by the monotonously repeated ὤφθη—"He was seen of Cephas, then of the Twelve"—and by the unhesitating placing of his own heavenly vision side by side with other appearances of the Risen Lord. If it be said that this simple "he was seen" does not exclude other more material manifestations of the Lord's presence I must answer that it neither asserts them nor implies them. Most remarkable is it that Paul claims to have heard

no word spoken to him at the time of his heavenly vision, all important as such a message would have been to him. He says: "Am I not an Apostle? Have I not seen the Lord?" Why does he not add, "Did not Jesus himself call me his Apostle?" Only because he could not. Moreover, Paul is at great pains to explain to his readers in this very chapter his view of resurrection and a resurrection body. He co-ordinates Christ's resurrection so closely with ours as to say Christ is not risen if so be that the dead rise not. He tells us that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. He asserts that the body that is sown is not that body that shall be. He establishes the strongest antitheses in language between the natural body which is laid in the ground and the spiritual body that shall live hereafter. By what train of thought did Paul come to these astonishingly original conclusions which differ from the doctrine of his Jewish masters no less strikingly than from the speculations of Grecian philosophers? Must it not have been in part at least by reflecting upon the death and new life of his Master, whose resurrection runs like a golden thread through this marvelous chapter? Or, rather, let us ask, could Paul have come to conclusions at utter variance with the known fate of Jesus and yet have imagined that he was a witness of Christ's resurrection? I, at all events, with a good conscience, take refuge in the great Apostle to the Gentiles, and, while believing in the reality of Christ's resurrection, I believe that what rose victorious from the nether

world was the spirit, that he himself in the fullness of his spiritual power triumphed over death and showed himself alive after his resurrection. What became of his body I know not; no one knows. How many attempts have been made to account for its absence, without any permanent success! The one certain thing seems to be that it disappeared, neither friends nor foes knew how nor whither. St. Matthew tells us that the story was current in his day that the Disciples themselves had stolen the body. Psychologically this is impossible, but I can see no good reason for rejecting the statement, supported as it is in the second century by Justin Martyn, Tertullian, and the acts of Pilate. Even those persons who cannot bring themselves to dispense with a body altogether feel impelled to postulate so profound a metamorphosis that the material body is a material body no longer. Bishop Westcott seems to go further. In a private letter published April, 1904, in the *Hibbert Journal* he says, "If the body had remained, the idea of continuity would have been lost, and so through the action of God it passed away."

How, then, are we to understand the appearances of Jesus after his death? In the first place, we must admit there is a large subjective element in all such presentations. That this is likewise true of the appearances of Jesus is proved by the single fact that he was not seen by all nor by a single indifferent person. He showed himself alive to certain chosen witnesses. This one circumstance says everything. If it had been the will of God to gain the consent of the world a single

appearance to Pontius Pilate or to Caiaphas would have sufficed. The good faith of the Disciples has never been called in question. The profound and permanent change that took place in them during the weeks following the crucifixion, together with their own candid and earnest assertions on which they were ready at all times to stake their lives, have convinced the world of the sincerity of their belief. In other words, during those days something happened, something sufficiently important not only to change them for life, but to serve as the source of unnumbered inspirations to mankind and as the foundation-stone of a world-conquering religion. What was it?

I must remind you, in the first place, that resurrections from the dead are not included among the acts required by popular faith of founders of religion. Renan tells us, indeed, that heroes do not die, meaning that their friends do not allow them to die. He reminds us that after the death of Rabbi Judas the Holy his fellow-citizens promised death to any one who pronounced their teacher dead; and, more to the point, when Mohammed breathed his last the fiery Omar stood at the door of his house with drawn sword, swearing to strike off the head of any one who presumed to say that the prophet was no more. Granted: and yet neither of these men rose from the dead. If the love and faith of disciples are the powerful means of the resuscitation of the founders of religion, why is it that among them all Jesus alone is said to have risen? Among the adoring multitudes that followed Buddha

and Zoroaster, not to speak of Mohammed's hosts, was there not as much faith as could be furnished by the little handful of timid and demoralized Christian believers? Here we are in a position to speak decisively. No one dreamed of reanimating Mohammed. Zoroaster's second coming is still expected by the Parsees of Bombay, but no tradition of his resurrection ever arose. Of the dead Buddha his disciples could only say, "He is like the sun set behind the Astigari Mountains. We cannot say of him that he is here or there, but we can point him out in the discourses he delivered to us; in them he still lives." Even the Jews, so far as I am aware, entertained no belief of the resurrection of Messiah. In this respect Jesus stands alone, and his resurrection cannot be explained psychologically by a preconceived idea of what he ought to do or by any image suggested by the Old Testament. Here we are dealing with real, living faith and with contemporary evidence.

Yet there is a world, as Keim reminds us, of mental facts, especially in the domain of religion, that awakens in men strange convictions and inspirations. Long before Strauss and Renan, Celsus proposed this explanation of the resurrection and referred it to the hallucinations of Mary Magdalene. Psychologically it is not impossible that constant brooding on the memory of Jesus should have given rise to visual representations which were like him and yet were not like him. How often have we been confronted by such apparitions of our own dead! How easy it is to see them coming to

us on the crowded street, entering a door, seated in their old places. Healthy minds distinguish, of course, between actual objects of sensation and visions which are wholly subjective. Hence it is necessary for Renan and also for Schmiedel to assume that the Disciples were in a condition of excitement bordering on ecstasy.

The glance we can gain into their condition, however, tells us of doubt and depression bordering on despair. Nor can I believe that their helplessness, their dejection, the utter paralysis caused by Jesus' death, and their own wretched cowardice could have been at once and forever converted into such triumphant faith and exalted energy by their own unaided musings, even were their thoughts in one or two instances objectified into optical hallucinations. Further, as Keim reminds us, it is notorious that these states of mind are contagious. The exuberance of excitement which generates ocular hallucination demands a considerable time. One person excites another. The appearances are repeated until every one has enjoyed the experience and has seen something. The visionary enthusiasm of the Montanists persisted for half a century. Renan feels obliged to postulate a full year of uninterrupted vision and feverish intoxication. But the oldest Christian tradition, dating hardly five years from the event, enumerates exactly five appearances, excluding St. Paul's and two to the same group. What a contradiction to the demands of the theory of high-swollen enthusiasm! Just when ardent minds ought to be growing fanatical the fanaticism entirely ceases. How great are the diffi-

culties! Moreover, we note something strange, foreign, remote in these appearances of Jesus which does not look as if they were the creation of the minds which found so much difficulty in believing them.

Holzmann endeavors to obviate the necessity of popular enthusiasm by supposing that the visions followed in each instance the suggestion of Jesus that he would rise again on the third day. Hypnotism has taught us the power of suggestion. The patient is informed that at a certain day and hour an object will appear; and in due course it is seen. This is really too slight a thread on which to hang the faith of a world, and, moreover, what suggestion was made to St. Paul? St. Paul's conversion alone is the fatal objection to the hypothesis of subjective visions. What subjective state would have revealed to him the Saviour in heavenly glory at the moment when he was snorting like a war-horse with zeal to destroy Christ's followers? Thus it appears that it is easier to challenge the truth of Christ's resurrection than it is to disprove it or even to account for men's belief in it.

Is there, then, no way of escape, inward or outward, or must we remain in a purely agnostic and skeptical frame of mind? There is, I believe, a way not as yet considered by scholars and critics, because it lies outside the sphere of criticism in the domain of reality and nature and because it is mysterious. Yet it is a way that many are destined to take when they discover that there is no other way to a firm belief. Fifty years ago hardly a man whose beliefs were formed by reason

had any faith in the miracles of Christ recorded in the Bible. To-day men of science are willing to accept the majority of such miracles. How has this important change come about? By co-ordinating these cures, these expulsions of demons with similar phenomena around us which we can study and control. Obviously, the one simple, reasonable, satisfying solution to the resurrection problem is that Jesus after death appeared to his Disciples and convinced them that he was yet alive. The one reason why men of science refuse to accept this simple explanation is because they regard it as a miracle and because they have already convinced themselves that miracles do not happen. For centuries we have proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus to be a solitary, unique experience, without a counterpart in the experience of man. But the more unique an experience is made, the less disposed men are to receive it, because such an experience cannot be brought within the domain of universal law. Bring this event, however, within the domain of a possible experience, however infrequent, and if it is supported by good evidence it will be accepted. This has been the history of other miracles of Christ which, once derided, are now respected. It will be the history of this supreme miracle. To tell the truth, we have followed the critical labyrinth about as far as it will take us. In itself it is insufficient to bring us to living faith in a Risen Saviour. What we want now, while holding fast to our Christian tradition, is to gain entrance to the vast orderly world of God's spiritual laws before we

assert what can or cannot happen there. I cannot forbear quoting here the well-known words of Frederick Myers. "I venture now on a bold saying; for I predict that in consequence of the new evidence all reasonable men a century hence will believe in the resurrection of Christ, whereas in default of the new evidence no reasonable men a century hence would have believed it." I have no doubt that this suggestion will prove unacceptable at first to the majority of believers, who will say this is to cheapen the resurrection of Christ; it is to place it on a par with the miserable chicaneries of spiritualists. Yet the fact that almost every science began in chicanery and superstition ought not to prejudice men against it after it has delivered itself from its youthful follies. It is so in the domain of the spiritual, with respect to the relation of the dead to the living. Amid much deception and fraud most impartial investigators have convinced themselves that veritable manifestations from beyond the grave are sometimes given us. The central truth of the Christian religion thereby receives a support which it heretofore lacked. Nor do I for a moment compare the importance of Christ's self-revelation or the value of his proof of victory over death with the appearances investigated and approved by the Society for Psychical Research. The value of Christ's revelation exceeds those of other men in the same proportion that his personality exceeds theirs. The value of Christ's resurrection is not merely that some human being showed himself alive after death, but that he, the Captain of our salvation, triumphed over death and all

the terrors of the nether world, and that the providence of God, which seemed set at naught by the Cross, was established. On that victory of his, and not on the hopes and conjectures of the philosophers, our faith in our own immortality chiefly rests. If it be said, this, after all, is no resurrection, I reply that such an objection rests on an inadequate conception of the nature of the spiritual body. A deeper analysis will show it growing out of the life of the old body, according to St. Paul's figure, as the plant grows out of the seed. At all events, how slight are these difficulties in comparison with those which beset us in every other direction. On this hypothesis, how comprehensible become the appearances immediately following death and their abrupt cessation, the sudden appearing and disappearing, the passing through closed doors, the traumatic stigmata, the fact that he was seen only by those who already knew and loved him and were thinking of him, above all, the few definite, numbered, well-remembered manifestations, so different from the loose, unnumbered creations of popular enthusiasm.

There is one general remark I wish to make at the end of this long discussion. It is, as a rule, the disposition of historical and critical scholars to make the truth and reality of the resurrection of Christ hang solely on the evidence of the conflicting records of the New Testament. By demolishing or weakening that evidence they assume that they have disposed of the fact. Is this, after all, a warrantable assumption? Must not the acknowledged faith of contemporaries, of those who

knew him best, also count for something? Hannibal's passage of the Alps, to use a time-honored comparison, is described in a very different manner by Livy and by Polybius. And yet we believe in the fact because at one time we know Hannibal to have been on one side of the Alps, and the impression produced upon his contemporaries, preserved by history, convinces us that at a later time he was on the other side. May not the same argument be used in favor of the resurrection of Jesus? Schmiedel denies it on the ground that the actuality of Christ's resurrection depends upon the very narrations called in question; but I believe that apart from I Corinthians, the two Marks, Matthew, etc., we have a witness in the personal faith and changed lives of Christ's personal friends in the introduction of a new force that lifted the world out of its old courses and that persists to the present time. A greater set of events was set in motion than Hannibal inaugurated in Italy. Men accustomed to measure causes by effects will agree that something happened. Was not this what Jesus counted on when he said, "I have a greater witness than that of John." In other words, is not the Christian consciousness and experience an independent witness of almost equal weight with any historical record?

We have been accustomed to regard the resurrection of the body of the Crucified as the assured truth of the resurrection, and, as Hausrath says, we have attempted to establish the world-conquering power of his Gospel on that one fact, a fact always exposed to doubt.

But faith in the Risen, Living Lord ought to be based on spiritual certainties which cannot be doubted. And it may be that God has allowed many of the old external props to be shaken only to drive us to lean more absolutely on the rock that cannot be shaken, the whole Personality of Jesus Christ. That Personality which contained within it life for a world had nothing to fear from death. Without the resurrection truth, without the living Jesus, his faith long since would have disappeared from the earth. The greatest of men would have come and would have left no trace behind. The gold of his words would have been buried in the dust of oblivion. For a while Galilee and the Apostles would have preserved some fact and some fiction in regard to him. But there would have been no St. Paul, no Church, no new humanity. But, being what he was, we speak only words of sober truth when we say that he could not be holden of death, that time and forgetfulness of the grave could not dim the brightness of his personality.[1] The evidence that Jesus lived was necessary to those who were smitten down by the spectacle of the Cross. And God gave them evidence sufficient for their need. That which was temporal in the conception of the resurrection sustained the Church in its agony. That which is eternal remains for us.

[1] *New Testament Times.*

Part III

THE PERSONAL LIFE

I

THE POWER OF FAITH

As it is written, The just shall live by faith.—Romans i: 17.

NO words spoken by Christ are stranger than his words in regard to faith. It is plain he meant by faith something quite different from what we mean by it. What Jesus seems to have meant is contact with some power which is capable of increasing incalculably the effectiveness of our life, a power that is able to lift us to new courses and that can enable us to do what we formerly were unable to do. It is as if a man had arisen in the olden time when men carried their burdens on their backs or on the bunches of camels and the brightest light was a tallow-candle, and by practical demonstration had shown them how their burdens and they themselves might be carried swiftly and without effort by some hitherto unknown energy and their night be turned into day. And this seems to be just what Jesus meant. He had discovered a power which had lifted him far above the plane of our mortal weakness, and he believed he could communicate that secret to us.

In the face of Jesus' life and the lives of his saints why should we doubt this? We know to-day that mechanical energies are not the only energies of this

great universe. God is a Spirit, and what His mechanical forces accomplish in the material world the power of His Spirit can accomplish in the spiritual world. But first we must learn how to obtain the co-operation of that Spirit. The law seems to be this: Before we can make use of the Spirit of God to purify and strengthen our lives some vital and personal contact between God and our soul is necessary, and in that contact the surrender of our will to His will takes place.

The electric energy we use so freely was apparently always as widely diffused through space as it is now. Men saw it in the lightning and in the feeble attraction of amber. But before that energy was of any use to them they had to learn to bring it down to earth and to generate it as they needed it. So it is with the Spirit of God. In order to gain the incalculable help God is able to render us it is necessary to establish a direct personal contact between our souls and God's Spirit—a contact which can be established only by the surrender of our will to His will and by faith and prayer. Faith is the opening of a door between our soul and God. Closed, it can keep God out: open, it can let Him in. And the measure of our faith alone determines the measure in which the Spirit of God is poured out on us. This it is, and nothing else. There is no niggardliness, no poverty, and no favoritism in God. His riches surpass all our capacity to receive. Our deficiency lies only in ourselves, in our lack of faith, in our unwillingness to surrender to Him.

Consider the wonderful work of reclamation now going on in our Western country. On the one side is the barren desert, consisting only of shifting sand and worthless sage-brush. On the other side are green pastures, smiling orchards, fertile fields. The soil is the same, the climate is the same. What has caused the wonderful transformation? A contact has been established. The gates are open. The waters which were always there, but which used to run from the mountains to the sea, are now brought into vital contact with the parched and barren earth. And where there was only death, now there is life. An old German in Wyoming once said to me, "All that hell needs is a little water to make it comfortable."

But how are we to come into this contact with the Spirit of God? First, let us remember that God can reveal Himself without any help from us, but He cannot take possession of our hearts without help from us. He enters our life overwhelmingly, if only for a brief period, just as the lightning flashes across the sky or the flood pours down the mountains. Every one of us, I presume, has had some such experience as this, when as children the sense of awe or mystery or guilt or rapture dawned in us, and we began to pray; or when we looked out into the star-lit depths of heaven and from that time realized that this earth is not our only home; or in moments of great weakness, when all earthly things seemed slipping away, and suddenly we found beneath us and around us the Everlasting Arms; or in the accusations of conscience; or in some

great blessing we have obtained from God, and we have said in the silence of the night, in the solitude of our heart, "If I am not happy now I shall never be happy." Or we have prayed and He has heard our prayer, and the inevitable has not happened and the impossible has been granted us; or in the mystery of love, in which if only for a little while our life has been transfigured and a new heaven shone upon a new earth. For a few days, for a few hours, we have stood before God, we have realized God, and, though the splendor of that light has grown dim, something has lingered. Life has never been quite the same. It is as if men groping in thick darkness were suddenly illumined by a flash of lightning from on high, saw the splendor of the world and the pitfalls that surround their path, and, though the darkness returned, yet they did not wholly forget what the light had revealed.

But what we want is not the brief, intermittent flashes of God's lightnings, but the light and warmth of His sun, His constant presence in our heart. When God enters a man's life he knows it, and when God's spirit leaves a man he knows it. Some men do not attempt to draw near to God because they do not believe in God. They think either that there is no God or that God is a mere name in a book—a blind, unintelligent deity, another name for the unchanging laws of nature. What, then, is your life? What is its sustaining thought for the present, and its hope for the future? It was the lack of this support which made Tolstoy wish to hang himself, though possessing all

that this world could give him, and which caused James Thomson to write:

> The world rolls on forever like a mill;
> It grinds out death and life and good and ill;
> It has no conscience, heart or mind or will.

I believe, however, that a far greater number of men do not draw near to God because they do not want what God can give them, and because they fear what God will demand of them. What is the reason that we do not always live in the felt presence of God? Why is God not always present in our hearts? It is because we cannot, dare not, will not make the necessary surrender that would keep Him there. We do not wish to banish God altogether from our lives, or to invite the hosts of hell to make their home with us. We know how to judge bad men and bad women as well as another. We love the good, and many things are good in our lives. Many of our relations with our fellow-men are sound, sweet, pure, helpful, so that they could hardly be improved upon. But there are other relations which are far otherwise. There may be persons whose very existence on the earth is a reproach to us. There are thoughts, desires, deeds, and habits which we do not wish to bring into God's sight nor into the sight of those who love us. So there arises a painful lack of harmony in our lives, a profound cleft seems to run to the depths of our being. We feel ourselves drawn in opposite directions, rejoicing in the higher law of our minds, but conscious ever of another law in

our members which brings us into subjection to the law of sin. Now we are carried away by high hopes and noble purposes. Now we put them from us and live as if they did not exist, and fall into sin and despondency. And what discourages us most is that we do not believe we could free ourselves from this if we tried. Try? God knows how many times we have tried, how earnestly we have vowed, and how miserably we have failed. Luther's friend Staupitz says: "I have vowed to God a thousand times that I would amend my life and be a better man; and I have never kept one of my vows. Now I will vow no more, since I cannot perform it. Unless God show mercy upon me for Christ's sake I cannot appear before Him."

Perhaps no one has ever described this divided will with such psychological insight as St. Augustine: "The new will I began to have was not yet strong enough to overcome that other will strengthened by long indulgence. So these two wills, one old, one new, one carnal, and the other spiritual, contended with each other, and disturbed my peace. Still bound to earth, I refuse, O God, to fight on Thy side, as much afraid to be freed from all bonds as I ought to have been afraid to be trammeled by them. There was naught in me to answer thy call, 'Awake, thou sleeper!' but only drawling, drowsy words—'Presently, yes, presently, wait a little while'; but the presently had no present, and the little while grew long. I said within myself, 'I will do it,' and as I said it I was on the point of the resolve; I all but did it; yet I did it not. And I made

another effort and all but succeeded; yet I did not reach it and did not grasp it, hesitating to die to death and to live to life, and the evil to which I was so rooted held me more than the better life I had not tried."

Could any description be more perfect? But after all, you say, what can it matter? If the struggle be so hard, even if a man by one mighty effort of his will make the supreme renunciation, cut himself loose from all that impedes him, and set his face in the right direction, how soon the power of old evil and habit will reassert itself, the enthusiasm will flag, and the old life will return! If there were no God, no mighty power standing beside us ready to take us up when our feeble strength failed and our struggling had ceased, this would be true for most of us, and the task forever impossible. But the experience of millions of men and women testifies that there is such a power, able and willing to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. With me this is no matter of faith or of opinion; I have seen it take place too often. It is the experience of myriads of trusting souls that this sense of God's constant presence is a source of absolute repose, of new purity and spiritual strength. Only to obtain the help of that power this one question must be settled, Do we desire it? Would we give up our sins if we could? Are we willing to make our will one with God to this extent, that we no longer purpose to go on in our sin; that we no longer plan for it, tolerate it, make a place for it in our lives; that we are willing to make no provision for

the flesh to fulfil its lusts? It is this surrender of ourselves that is all-important, the giving up of our will to God's will, for it establishes the vital contact by which the Divine Spirit can act on us. It is like the percussion-cap or primer which discharges the cannon. That feeble spark cannot hurl the mighty missile, but it can release the energy which is able to do so. And that act of surrender is the end of our sin. Since our sin consisted only in the opposition of our will to God's will the withdrawal of our opposition sets us free, and so far as God is concerned our sin becomes as if it had never been. It is like some great tree that has fallen across a mighty river. As long as it is fixed there, there is friction, there is opposition. The stream bears heavily on the tree, and the tree resists the action of the river. But when the roots that held the tree in place are broken or undermined all friction and opposition ends and the tree floats peacefully on the current. So the will of God bears heavily on us, not that it may destroy us, but that it may break or undermine the evil which would destroy us. As long as we resist there is friction, there is opposition and enmity; but when our will yields to God's will all enmity, all opposition ends. Hence God is able to make the wonderful promises contained in the Scriptures: "I will blot out their transgressions and remember them no more forever." "Though their sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He set our sins from us. The surrender of our will sets us free, be-

cause then the opposition is ended and we are one with God. His power enters into us and transforms us into His likeness.

At last for St. Augustine that day dawned; after saying, "To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow," he awoke at last and said, "Why not to-day; why not at once make an end of the matter?" and the battle was won. It is like the supreme surrender of love, which admits us at last to all knowledge and to all joy. At that moment a new perception dawns on a man. In some inscrutable manner he perceives that that which he thought to be impossible is possible. He feels that God is able to do it, and as soon as he feels it to be possible it becomes possible. In that moment the chains which bound him may be broken, the thing he most dreaded may simply cease and come to an end in his life forever. Or it may not cease all at once. It may continue, and yet never again with the same power; and, though he fall, yet like an eager and courageous runner he will rise again and press on until he has gained the goal. That is the real meaning of the great doctrine of justification by faith, not that God ascribes to us by a process of bookkeeping what is not ours, but the perception of faith that God is able to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves, the consciousness of the possibility of deliverance which brings deliverance.

In all this I do not pretend that persons so guarded and guided by God are sheltered from all dangers and temptations of this life or that they can expect a protection which is denied others. God has no favorites,

and if He had I should not care to be one of them. The laws which are good enough for the rest of mankind are good enough for me. "Whatever is fit for thee, O earth, is fit for me." But I do solemnly affirm that the worst evils of this life—fear, cowardice, despair, self-contempt, the terrors of conscience, and the hiding of God's face—are not for them. "I have given myself to the service of God," said Hillel the Jew; "no cry of despair shall proceed from my house." I know that for our earthly life we need earthly prudence and calculation; but beyond all our prudence and calculation lies the vast, dim, incalculable future, where only one calculation holds—trust in Him to whom nothing is unforeseen or unexpected.

Lover divine and perfect Comrade,
Waiting content, invisible yet, but certain,
Be Thou my God.

II

THE VALUE OF LIFE

For what is your life?—St. James iv: 14.

WHAT is the use of asking this question? As if I knew, as if you knew, as if any one knew! Ask what life is, and we must reply, as St. Augustine did to some one who asked him what time is, "If you had not asked me I might have told you, but since you ask the question I must confess that I do not know."

Yet this is a question which asks itself. For what have the best and wisest men always thought about? What is the end to which their studies and speculations and researches always tend, and never quite attain, but the old riddle of the Sphinx—the meaning of life? We read their writings and strive to attain their wisdom, hoping always to learn something more about life. And we do learn something. But from the depths of our being arises another question which they cannot answer—not "What is life in the abstract?" but "What is my life?" What is that palpitating thing within me of which I alone am conscious and which is the source of all the joy and sorrow, the bright hope and deep disappointment, the love, the hate, the memories, the inward sadness, the acts, the fate and

destiny that make up my individual existence? Can another man tell me what that is? Nay. Can I tell myself? Shall I ever see it as it is? Shall I ever gain the clue to its labyrinth or unravel its tangled and broken threads and see my life simplified, luminous, and transparent; or must I go on stumbling in the dark, blind and erring to the end?

I know that there are men and women to whom these questions do not seem to occur at all, human beings in form, sleek cattle in mind, who appear to be born only to consume the crops and to pasture and grow fat upon the shows of life. But with even them this bovine indifference is not constant, and with almost all it is more apparent than real. I have been permitted an insight into individual consciences and lives which few men have had, and I may speak of life not as one who is beguiled by illusions or as the dupe of society and its artificialities, and I know that even the most placid and conventional people who make our world are not as placid or as conventional as they seem to be. Sometimes they hear the rolling thunder that precedes the breaking storm; sometimes they feel the solid earth fluid and palpitating beneath their feet; sometimes they feel volcanic fires of passion burning and consuming within, ready to overflow and pour desolation over their life. They are trained. They are people of the world, and they give no sign but smile on, though within the heart is shuddering with mortal fear or convulsed by pain. Life is dark, mysterious, incomprehensible, but it is greater in good and evil, more mov-

ing in its tragedy, more amusing in its comedy than it seems.

For what is your life? In its duration a vapor, in its content a dream. Perhaps the whole of our life is but a dream of God's. Who has not been struck by the dream-like character of life, with its strange, incongruous happenings, its abrupt changes, its magical transformations, its recurrent images, its oblivions and poignant memories, its essential loneliness? We may live constantly with the one who is dearest to us, but each lives in his own dream. How little do we know of the fundamental facts of the other's existence, how seldom do we reveal ourselves or speak of that which is most personal, most vital to us! It is not that we are unwilling or that we wish to conceal, but that we despair of speaking so as to be understood.

> Nay, be assured no secret can be told
> To any who divined it not before.

Sometimes as I look back over my own life with all its tasks, studies, relations, experiences, especially when I think of the thousands of persons, many of them so much loved, with whom I have been brought into contact, whose lives and personalities were once so real and so near and now are so remote and so shadowy, it seems to me exactly like a dream—wonderful beyond all words, but vanishing.

> Again ye come, ye hovering forms, I find you
> As early to my clouded sight ye shone.
> Shall I attempt this once to seize and bind you?
> Still o'er my heart is that illusion thrown?

Ye crowd more near, then be the reign assigned you
And sway me from your misty, shadowy zone.
My bosom thrills with youthful passion shaken
By magic airs which round your march awaken.

Of happy days ye bring the blissful vision,
The dear, familiar faces rise again.
And like an old and half-extinct tradition
First love returns with friendship in his train.
Renewed is pain, with mournful repetition
Life tracks his devious labyrinthine chain.
And names the good whose cheating fortunes tore them
From happy hours and left me to deplore them.

And grasps me now a long unwonted yearning
For that serene and solemn spirit land.
My heart to faint æolian measures turning
Sways like a harp-string by the breezes fanned.
I thrill and tremble, tear on tear is burning,
And the stern heart is tenderly unmanned.
What I possess I see far distant lying,
And what I lost grows real and undying.

But to say that life is like a dream does not make it any more unreal, for we have learned that dreams are one of the most poetic and significant factors of life. It only shows once more that our real life is within and that unless our broken, fragmentary, purposeless lives are parts of a greater whole and of a more enduring purpose—the mind of God—they are naught.

For who can say whether his own life, on the whole, has been good or evil, happy or unhappy? If Christ forbade men to call him good, what shall we say? Have we any scale on which to weigh the one against the

other, or is it a mere question of quantity, or frequency, or duration? Sometimes one evil deed to which the soul may have been a perfect stranger appears to wreck a life. And yet does it really wreck it? Can I believe that the soul made in the Image of God is so weak? Perhaps the time will come when we shall see that that downfall was the necessary step to some great progress. For a world in which evil served no good, a world in which man gained nothing and learned nothing from the sin and evil he did not create, but which he must encounter, would be a world beyond redemption, too vile a world for Christ to die for or for a Christian to live in. As St. Augustine says, "If it were not good that there should be evil, evil would not have been permitted by omnipotent Goodness."

Sometimes one shining act redeems a life and lifts a man above his past. From a man from whom we little expect it comes a deed of touching kindness, or a cool, heroic surrender of life itself for another, by which he offers an atonement for his soul. Or a being apparently all evil undergoes some mighty change in the course of which the old vile self is swallowed up and a new and wonderful self is born. Several years ago a man of force and education came to me to pour into my ears the story of his complete ruin and downfall. I sat in silence for two hours listening to his terrible revelations, and as I listened I kept wondering: Is there any sound thing in you? Is there any relation of life you have not betrayed and ruined? Then some new statement would sweep away my half-formed hope. At last

he paused and asked me, "What can you make of that?" I replied, "I see two things. The first, of course, is suicide. You must often have thought of it. You cannot bear this burden much longer. You have been throwing life away with both hands, and now life itself is casting you off. You may go on for a month or six weeks, but I do not think you can bear it much longer." He sighed and said, "What else do you see?" I said, "I see God. Did it ever occur to you that He might save you?" His face took on that stony, expressionless appearance which many men assume when one mentions the name of God, and he said, "I can't follow you; I don't know what you are talking about." I said, "That is not true; you know what I mean." He said, "Once or twice in my life it has come to me as in a dream that God might save me." I said, "Would you accept God's help if He offered it to you?" and he replied, "I would." I said, "Will you ask for it?" and, throwing himself on his knees, he sobbed out a few broken-hearted words of prayer, and, covering his face with his hands, he knelt in silence for perhaps five minutes. When he rose he looked at me and I saw something in his face which was not there before. He said, very quietly, "God has heard my prayer, and I am saved." If the Lord Christ had entered the room visibly and, laying his hand on that man's head, had said, "I will; be thou clean," I do not believe that the change would have been profounder or more immediate. The vice and evil which had desolated his life simply ceased, and in their place a character of such purity,

sweetness, and unselfishness was born that I cannot speak of it without shame for myself.

If that man had died five years ago he would have died an abandoned sinner. His life would have been rightly regarded as a failure and a curse. Should he die to-night he would die as the child of God, and his life has been a glorious victory. But this good self was not created out of nothing in that moment. It was there, only asleep, crushed and buried under a mountain of evil. And what gave him his new life was that, saved himself, his first thought was to save others. He gave himself to goodness with as much enthusiasm as he had given himself to evil.

Or consider happiness. Is the amount of happiness we have enjoyed any test of the value of life? Can any of us be sure that we have enjoyed more than we have suffered in our life on earth, or do we often know when we are happy at the time? Should any of us be willing to live our whole life over again exactly as it was, merely for the sake of repeating its pleasures? Or could we select ten years of it, five years, one year, that we should like to repeat? Probably few persons could be found willing to live again a month of life for any other reason than to avoid their sins and errors, or to learn the lessons they had failed to learn. On the other hand, can we not see, in looking back, how much we owe to parts of our life which were hard and unhappy, when we were driven back upon ourselves and in sorrow and solitude we amassed a moral capital that we have drawn on ever since?

Who ne'er his bread in sorrow ate,
  Who ne'er the lonely midnight hours
Weeping upon his bed hath sat,
  He knows you not, ye heavenly powers.

Oscar Wilde tells us that his mother once showed him those sacred lines of Goethe's translated by Thomas Carlyle and written by Carlyle's hand and that he obstinately refused to recognize any truth in them. "To learn that lesson," says Wilde, "I was obliged to go to prison, but it was worth going to prison for."

If I am unhappy, is that any reason why I should hate my life? Is it not still within my power to make others happy and to give them strength? And can I do this without finding true happiness? If I am unhappy, is that a reason why I should end my life? Not unless God has revealed to me in a vision that my continued existence can bring no blessing to any human being, and that it is forever beyond my power to do a good act; otherwise I have no right to end it and to leave that good undone. The happiness or the unhappiness of life is a very imperfect criterion of its value or usefulness. Many who sow in tears reap in joy. Many a thing pleases us well at first which does not please us afterward when it has become a permanent part of our memories. We judge it then by a different standard, not with reference to a momentary happiness, but to life as a whole. So many a first becomes last, and the last first.

But good or evil, happy or unhappy, life possesses certain things for which every man who has had them is

grateful. There are some things in this world which are of value for their own sake. Knowledge is one of these things. After the service of God and humanity it is the most rational passion known to man. Or, as Goethe said, "After a good conscience and good health, knowledge is the best thing in the world." To be alive to such a world as this, which, apart from man, is certainly a credit to its Creator, to tread the path humanity has trod, to come into contact with the great spirits of the past, to know those truths which alone make life a blessing—this is for man a good, a solace, a source of delight to be thankful for. This world presents to us problems of the highest order. It could furnish worthy employment for minds as superior to ours as the mind of a Newton is superior to that of a Bushman. No matter whether we look at nature or humanity, to the seeing eye it is always beautiful, always full of new and charming mystery. Armed with this one thought, we can make a noble and a worthy use of life.

Experience is also a good. The mysterious and profound writer of the second chapter of Genesis gave us the picture of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Apparently one is inseparable from the other. Man cannot know good without knowing evil, and he cannot do good without the possibility of doing evil. So the tragedy of human life, the element of evil, sin, suffering and deliverance, fall and rising again, are all given. Life presents itself to us as something to be attained, something to struggle against, and in

that struggle our will is born. It is man's destiny to traverse the earth, to come into contact with every form of reality, to wrestle with evil and to be purified by suffering. Without this his soul would only sleep as the plants sleep. Life imposes on us certain virtues as the condition of our existence and well-being. It brings us into relations with other human beings, and in those relations we are born again. Who would be without this experience? Whatever his mistakes, however terrific the tragedy of it, who would cut the ties that bind him to humanity, or obliterate the memories of his life? I have asked many persons this question—sad persons, sunken persons, persons who had wandered widely from the right way—whether, if they could, they would forget the past and the lessons life has taught them. But I have found no man or woman so abject as to be willing to part with the experiences they had gained by living, however fearful the price they had paid for it.

Love is another good life holds for men—perhaps the greatest good, and he who has truly loved cannot accuse life very severely. If his love has been truly requited he need ask this earth for nothing more. If it has not been requited, nevertheless he has had it. He has felt its transforming power; through it he has touched the infinite. His eyes have beheld the mystery. His heart is awake to a thousand tender and holy things which the man who has never loved does not know. His life may be sad, but it is beautiful. It is an immense good to have known Jesus Christ

and to have learned from him what life is and what love is.

God is the chief Good life contains, for this Good includes all other goods. To know God, to love God—is not that the sum of all joy, of all peace, and of all knowledge, the open door to the infinite and eternal world of the Spirit? If these things are true, life cannot be essentially evil, and we should beware of blaspheming the infinite Goodness that gave us life, by pronouncing it such. If we have had these things, or any of them, a thousand years of gratitude and service would not sufficiently pay our obligation to the Giver. For my own part, I confess, I have found life good, and I can still look up and thank the Power that gave me birth. If God were to offer me a second life on this earth I should certainly accept it, though if I had another life to live I should try to do more for others and less for myself. Life for each of us is what we find and make our own. The best and highest which this earth contains exist only for the best and highest. If we are worthy of them they are ours.

III

THE TEMPLE OF GOD

Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.
—Revelation iii: 12.

PART of this verse is engraved on the tombstone of Phillips Brooks, and those who placed it there were well guided. He was a man who found the temple of God early and who left it infrequently, and in the portion of his life we know best, in the full blaze of his glory and his power, he seemed to become like Anna the prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, who departed not from the temple but served God there night and day. A few of the greatest preachers who ever lived may have sounded life on more sides, but Phillips Brooks, having found the greatest theme to which the heart of man responds, was content to build up his great harmonies on that alone. He said of himself that he had but one sermon. St. John also, in his old age, had but one sermon. He repeated, "Little children love one another," so often that at last people are said to have grown tired of it and to have begged the Apostle to tell them something else. Phillips Brooks

varied his theme so unendingly that no one became tired of it.

The first thought which this splendid verse suggests is entering the temple of God, and, I suppose, in some sense we all know what this means. Poor and sad is that life for whom the walls of this low earthly house never dissolve and reveal the splendid and holy temple of God on high, the house not made by hands, but by spiritual deeds and sacrifices, where God continually dwells. I cannot describe this temple as I would. I can say in a poor, feeble, halting way what it means to me, but to every one it will mean something different. Yet sometimes merely to be reminded of our highest hopes refreshes our whole soul.

The idea of a temple is a very old idea, but it is not the oldest idea of religion. Once men built their altars under the great dome of the sky, and they sent up their prayers into the vast face of Heaven. There is something grand and free in the thought that God is everywhere and that wherever He has recorded His name we may worship Him and He will come to us and bless us. Yet as religion began to separate itself from all material objects and to concentrate itself upon its own spiritual ideals temples began to rise everywhere all over the world. Houses were reared exclusively to God, free from all profane association, entering which religiously men felt that they were coming into the presence of God and renewing their relations with Him and with the unseen spiritual world. The experience of mankind has proved that

this is a good thing. It is all very well to say that the whole world is the temple of God and that all our time should be consecrated to Him. But unless there is one spot on our earth which especially suggests God and some particular time set apart for His service our religious feelings are apt to evaporate. Rather, they are swallowed up in a flood of other interests and other things.

Sometimes, as I have stood in some great church at night, silent and empty and dark, and have thought of the thousands and tens of thousands of men and women who have worshiped God there, of the fruitful words that have echoed on that air, of the penitence, the sorrow, the joy, the gratitude that have gone up to God from that place, of the children who have been baptized at the font, of the marriage vows that have been exchanged at the altar, of the bodies of the good and wise and beautiful which have been carried up and down that aisle—then I begin to realize what the sanctity of a church means and that every church which has been loved by its people is consecrated by their affection and their faith. One great function of the Church is that it helps to keep the spiritual and infinite element of life constantly before our minds.

All faith and hope and love that are not rooted in God are narrow, temporal, and disappointing. He who believes in spirits and souls all around him and in no divine Spirit above him is superstitious. The hope that ends with the world and this life will soon have an end. Yet beyond this earth God is without end. The

love which goes from neighbor to neighbor and from man to man is mortal. The love which loves in God is immortal. All this is what the Church of God is intended to represent to men on earth—a task, it must be confessed, which the Church has performed very indifferently. In consequence of our unhappy divisions, in consequence of our indifference to beauty and our fear of truth, in consequence of our niggardliness in offering our highest and best to the service of God, the Church is far from being the grand, uniting, teaching, elevating power in the world which it might be. And just as far as the Church fails to express what is highest in the human soul it fails to touch the hearts of men.

Beholding the poverty of the Church, untouched by its services, failing to hear the grand, ennobling truths of religion set forth in language which is worthy of them, multitudes of thinking people have begun to despise the Church. They either refuse to attend its services or they attend them from a sense of duty or old habit, with a sullen or resigned air, not expecting or allowing themselves to be touched, inspired, or even interested. They compare our artless performances with the art of the world. They contrast our dull utterances with the carefully prepared speeches of play-actors, and they think in their hearts that the theater is a greater and more useful institution than the Church, more adapted to men's needs, better able to teach moral lessons, and they even assert that the theater is to be the Church of the future. And yet if the Church were wise enough

and rich enough to make use of the means at her disposal, what possible comparison could there be between the Church and the theater? Architecture, sculpture, painting, oratory and music and the drama, too, are some of the arts religion and the Church have created and which the Church alone knows how to unite as she unites all.

The whole Church is like a single instrument, built and played upon by the various arts to produce one harmonious effect. The vaulted roof rears itself on high. The tower rises higher. The bells peal without; the organ peals within. Nowhere are so many voices raised in song or in praise of so high an object. Nowhere is silence so holy or language so divine. Nowhere are beauty and truth and sublimity so united; and in the Church all these influences carry the soul in one direction, in the direction of that which is eternal.

There is, indeed, another stage of which I would not say an evil word. It also, by the magic power of art, teaches great lessons to men. On that stage the arts are brought together, but only externally; just as the audience is brought together but is united by no inward tie, and when the play is played out it scatters without a thought or a care one for another. So on the stage the arts have no true unity. People sing of emotions which in nature could only be spoken. If they dance it is not from happiness. The prompter is in his box to show that what the actor utters is not his own, but another man's. The best actor is he who is most absolutely unmoved by what he utters. The

make-up is artificial. The painting has the appearance of beauty only at a distance. The brilliancy is tinsel. The whole effect is based on sham and illusion. Why? Because He who unites the arts, He who demands reality, not illusion, for His effects, God, the universal artist, is not present or is not thought of.

God also has His theater. His actors need no prompter. He multiplies them and His plots forever without repeating Himself once. In His play not an event is introduced which does not contribute to the final dénouement. Before the secret shrine in which the drama is really played stretches a great curtain painted with strange forms of animals and men and stars and flowers. Through that curtain shines a light which reveals these forms. Life speaks the prologue; Death lifts the curtains and reveals to us what lies within.

Secondly, I would consider music as one of the great ministers of religion. There must be some profound reason why the writers of the Bible speak so often of music as the language of Heaven, why St. John describes the song of praise which proceedeth from the throne of God and the Lamb. In music man speaks the language of the infinite. The very peculiarity of music is that it speaks no particular language. It is universal. It does not need to be translated. It translates itself and translates us, revealing to every heart its own secrets, its own sorrows, its own noblest hopes. The most wonderful thing about music is that it has no original, no counterpart on earth. Therefore we look

for its counterpart in Heaven. Every other art has its model in Nature which it copies with more or less fidelity. Music alone has no model. It builds its marvelous fabric out of purely spiritual elements, and its effects are purely spiritual. I know of nothing more wonderful in this world than the passion, the exaltation, the self-revelation to a thousand hearts locked up in a single score of Wagner or Beethoven. Sometimes a single theme can express that which generations of people have felt and suffered and striven for. One might almost say that Protestantism, the stern, moral, self-controlled religion of the North, is contained in Bach's Passion music, just as the warm, tender Catholicism of the South finds perfect expression in Gounod's "Ave Maria."[1] Bach solemnly chants the sufferings of the Son of God. Battling with an infinitude of sorrows, of insults, of vulgar abuse is the iron will of Jesus Christ to which the theme ever returns more and more sadly until at last the iron snaps and the struggle is ended. In Gounod's "Ave Maria," a woman's cry to a woman, we see a soul struggling with its own infirmity, striving to rise above the earth and repeatedly falling back, until at last it soars like a lark above its own infirmities and sins and cares into the sunshine of God's presence, then folding its wings like a tired bird, it sinks back to earth with a few happy notes of peace and thanksgiving.

We blame religion because it cannot be made altogether intelligible and rational. How is it with music?

[1] I am, of course, aware that Gounod's composition is founded on a theme of Bach's.

Suppose we could reduce all music to intelligible ideas and words, what would become of our greatest compositions? By rationalizing music we should ruin it. It would no longer speak its own language, but one of the petty languages of earth. It would no longer translate us; it would have to be translated.

Into the temple of our God every one of us enters at times. The walls of this poor tenement of clay open and let us out. We come into the presence of God, we stand before Him. We realize that life is essentially holy and that it was given to us by goodness. We see why it is that nothing defiled can enter the Holy City, for we know that we have never entered it when our heart was hot with passion or defiled with evil thoughts. Our infirmity is not that we never enter the temple, but that we are continually going out. God sends us a great mercy and we accept it from His hand and we resolve to keep it pure and immaculate that it may bless us all our days. But in a little while we have either forgotten all about it or it is half buried by sad and evil associations and the beautiful light that was lighted for a moment in our heart goes out. The door of the temple closes and we find ourselves dwelling once more in a world of material objects.

Did you ever hear how Zoroaster lost his shadow? One day in his wanderings he found himself surrounded by archangels whose glory was so great that his shadow totally disappeared, but in a little while he found it

again in a garden of temptation and sorrow. That is a perfect allegory of human life. At times the archangels surround us all, the old dark clinging self slips from us and we look round us with delight. The shadow, the false self that clings to us so closely, is gone. It seems as if our old sins had simply lost their power over us. The brightness is so great that the darkness is swallowed up. "Now," we think, "I am free, the shadow can never return. Hereafter my life shall be open to the light of God on every side." And yet, before the sun sets, the old shadow, the old temptations, the old clinging self have returned, and the light lighted by God has well-nigh disappeared.

How then is it possible for us to remain in this Temple which contains all that is good, all that we really love, where the sad, haunting, guilty shadow life cannot reach us? "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God and he shall go out no more." All prizes go to them that overcome. It takes us a long time to realize this. We set out in life with the idea that happiness will come to us, but after the first joy of merely being alive has abated we learn that the soul makes its own happiness, and that we find happiness just about as often as we find hundred-dollar bills in the street. It is the same everywhere. In the world we see men apparently singled out for distinction. Honors come to them, they are placed in positions of dignity and power. Fools regard this as the result of chance and good luck. They do not take into account the long years of silent preparation, the immense labor

that set that man above his fellows and made him the natural and logical candidate for the position. If the crisis always finds its man it is because the man has foreseen and compelled the crisis. Think of Lincoln. We read a book rich in wisdom and knowledge and we envy the author his happy ease of expression. But if we knew what that happy ease had cost him we should not envy him. Balzac spent ten years in forming a style that suited him, then ten years more in forming one that suited Paris.

It is exactly the same with our religious life. We set out with the idea that God will do it all. The temple is so beautiful that we think we shall never wish to go out. Our faith satisfies us so completely that we feel only pitying contempt for doubters. We are so happy in our homes, so safe and content in the love of those God has given us, that we do not contemplate the possibility of change. But in all probability not one of those things will last. Rather, they can be converted into realities which will bless us forever only by immense labor and sacrifice.

The pastor looks into the faces of his confirmation class as they humbly kneel to receive their first communion and he wonders if they know what religion is. In five years how many will be left? Only those who have overcome the immense obstacles that lie at the beginning of the religious life. The mother looks into the happy face of her daughter on her bridal day and she sighs to think of the sorrow and sacrifice and disillusion that must come to her before unselfish love,

strong love, love victorious over death can be hers. Life goes on, its first inspirations fade. The temple closes and we find ourselves again in the old world of sorrow, with the old dark shadow self clinging to us as closely as ever. The faith that was once so easy becomes difficult. Life and experience teach many lessons and ask many questions that our naïve and childish minds did not take into account, and we must either acquiesce in skepticism or wrestle with God for new truth until we have won a faith that cannot be shaken, an anchorage that will hold in all the vicissitudes of life.

Or sorrow comes to you. He who was your life is taken from your side and now the beautiful temple of God seems to close altogether. You hardly wish to enter it again. It is too full of sad associations. A pall seems to settle upon you. Your heart is turned to stone. It is true, you do not struggle, you do not rebel, but that is because you feel the futility of it, not because you love God. Sometimes you feel as if you almost hated Him. Of what use is religion and all these prayers? I could not be more bereaved, more robbed and desolate if there were no God. That, however, is a great mistake. There are two kinds of love in this world—temporary love and eternal love. If yours is of the latter kind then in the presence of an eternity of happiness which may begin now and must begin soon the temporary loss partly loses its sting. Your grief gradually changes into longing to meet the loved one again, to be united to him again. Your

heart begins to turn with foreshadowings of unutterable blessedness to the world where he now lives. But without God what reason have you to believe in that world? Unless He to whom you once prayed together has received him, where is he? But if he is safe in God, in God you will find him. And even now, the more you live in the spirit the more you are with him, the more earnestly and tenderly you think of him the nearer he draws to you. So the image of your love is not the image of the butterfly that hovers over the flower for a moment, extracts its honey and departs. It is the flower itself hanging upon its stem, the eternal principle of the plant, the flower that is nourished by all the forces of your earthly life. In God alone is it possible to love eternally.

So, if we persevere, the temple of God opens oftener and oftener to receive us, and we go out less and less frequently. Little by little the change takes place in heart and character and life. The image of the world of sin and sorrow we once bore is gradually obliterated and in its place God writes upon us our new name which no man knoweth save him that receiveth it. There comes at last to every man who overcomes that happy hour when his will and his life are in perfect accord, when he goes out no more; when his life is so surrounded by light that the dark shadow disappears, when goodness becomes easy and sin difficult, when his faith rests upon the solid foundation of experience and he himself becomes a pillar in the temple of God. Firm and unmoved, he stands in his place, and men,

seeing him, know that he stands there for God. He goes out no more. He could not go out now without weakening the whole fabric of God's temple. He has gained his victory and he will help many others to gain theirs.

IV

SALVATION BY WORK

I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down.—Nehemiah vi: 3.

NEHEMIAH was a type of great man to which Israel rarely gave birth. He was neither a king, a prophet, nor a priest, but a great layman—the first of that long line of good wardens and vestrymen who are still building the walls of our Jerusalem.

Nehemiah was intrusted with the task of restoring the city Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed. To his contemporaries it must have seemed a vain and fruitless enterprise. The ancient glories of Jerusalem had departed. The temple was in ruins. The once numerous population had shrunk to a handful of religious refugees. The city "at unity with itself, and the joy of the whole earth," was but a heap of stones. And yet when the little company of Jewish exiles set out from Babylon in the year 537 B.C. to make their way across the deserts to Judea they carried with them the religion of humanity, and the frail walls erected by Nehemiah were then the sole bulwark of the Kingdom of God on earth; so that it is perfectly safe to say that had that undertaking failed we should not be Christians to-day.

One would expect an inspired prophet to perceive the significance of such a moment, and the great Unknown of the Exile whom we call Isaiah failed not to do so and to encourage his departing friends with shouts of joy. "Go forth from Babylon, fly from the land of the Chaldeans, Proclaim it with shouts of joy! Tell it to the end of the earth, and say: Jehovah hath redeemed his servant Jacob. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings, that publisheth peace, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth. Up! up! go forth, touch no unclean thing. Go forth from among them. Cleanse yourselves, ye that bear Jehovah's vessels. Ye shall go forth with joy, and be led forth in peace. The mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."

All this, however, could not fail to call forth the opposition of those persons whose business is to criticize and to mock at everything that grows. In particular, Tobiah the Ammonite and Sanballat of Horan were jealous of Nehemiah's undertaking. They could not endure to see Jerusalem regaining some vestige of her former greatness. First they tried to ridicule Nehemiah, then to entrap him. One day they went out to see how the walls were rising. Sanballat mocked at Nehemiah's feeble attempt. Tobiah declared that a good-sized fox could demolish such a wall by jumping over it. Nehemiah quietly went on with his work, and the wall continued to rise. Finding that they could not discourage Nehemiah by their sneers, Tobiah and

Sanballat now took more decided steps. They pretended to believe that those little walls were a menace to the whole country, that Nehemiah was actually planning a revolt against the King of Persia, and that after rebuilding Jerusalem the next step would be to make himself King of the city. They wrote him a letter which ran as follows: "It is rumored among the nations, and Djeschim says that you and the Jews are making up your minds to revolt. That is why you are building this wall. And after it is built you will declare yourself King. You have brought prophets to Jerusalem to proclaim you King of Judah. All this shall be brought to the knowledge of the King of Persia. Come then and let us hear what you have to say."

To this Nehemiah made the fine reply that ought to be engraved upon the heart of every one who hopes to accomplish anything in this world: "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." Let us then take this as our subject—happiness, dignity, and salvation by work.

Man's destiny upon this earth is to be a working animal. He will finish his labors only when the planet he has transformed and remade shall no longer be capable of sustaining his life. The earliest evidences of his existence are his tools — the axes and hammers, the mortars and pestles, the arrows and fishhooks he has left behind him in the dens and caves he once inhabited. Beginning his existence probably in the tropics, man alone of all animals has been able

to take possession of the entire globe, to adapt himself to the severities and enervations of every clime. He has endured the long rigors of the polar night. He has grown brown and black beneath the intolerable fervor of an equatorial sun. But he has flourished best, and has grown to greatness and planted his civilizations in those parts of the world where he has been able to work hardest. On the other hand, where Nature supplies all his wants by her kindness, or crushes his aspirations by her severity, morally and physically man is at his worst.

The wants of other animals can be easily satisfied. Having food and a dwelling-place they are therewith content. The ant throws up her little fort exactly as she did on the day she won the admiration of Solomon. The eagle builds her dizzy home and spreads wide her sheltering wing beneath her young as when she suggested that touching image of God's loving kindness to Moses. The beaver has never dreamed of improving on the style of building invented by the first great architect of his race. But, on the other hand, man's wants are endless; therefore his labor is endless. His necessities supplied, he desires luxuries. The luxury of to-day becomes the necessity of to-morrow. He finds a joy in his work. He cannot bear to lay it down even after there is no real need of his working. Intoxicated by dreams he struggles, he plans, he creates, he achieves, and in so doing he finds his happiness. If the time ever comes when any considerable portion of humanity, emancipated from the servitude of

poverty and redeemed from the bitter struggle for daily bread, should have time and strength for better things it would not therefore cease to work. It would only transfer its labors to a higher sphere—that is to say, the realm of the Spirit.

In the Book of Genesis it is true we read that labor is a curse pronounced against our first parents in consequence of sin. To this we can only say that God's curses are better than man's blessings. For us labor is no curse. It is idleness that is the mother of all evils. The most pathetic figure on the whole canvas of our civilization (soon he will be the most menacing figure) is the unemployed man. He rises early in the morning and tramps the streets like a homeless dog, casting wistful glances on other laborers on their way to their daily work. Now, with his rough, embarrassed manner he timidly accosts an employer and is repulsed. Again and again he is told, "There is nothing for you." At last he takes society at its word and loses heart and soul and manhood and sinks into the ranks of the permanently unemployed whom we call tramps, whether they spend their time in aimlessly roaming through Europe or in wandering on foot over this country. Or else, because he must work and because all honest vocations are closed to him, he chooses a dishonest vocation and becomes a criminal.

It is when people have nothing to do, when they have lost a clear apprehension of their duty, that the sorrows and inequalities of this life, the Mystery of Providence, bear hardest on them. Then every walk in life seems

equally slippery and treacherous. All paths end in the void. Nothing is worth doing, and there is no progress. Innumerable have been the evils of the past, and the future will be no better. A dreary course of nature seems to them ever running down and ever beginning again at the same old point. Amid the darkness and the shadows man, haunted by terrible visions, is seen in the vain pursuit of a chimera he calls his destiny.

> He weaves and is clothed with derision,
> He sows but he shall not reap.
> His life is a dream and a vision
> Between a sleep and a sleep.

The cultured cynic who wrote Ecclesiastes declares as the result of his meditations no less than thirty times that all below is vanity and vanity of vanities. But Aristotle, calmly facing reality and noting one by one the great issues of life and death, did not find that all is vanity. "The course of this world is beset with shadows, but it is toward God." Man's destiny is dark, and yet it is sufficiently illumined by the single august word—duty.

I believe when the final verdict shall be passed upon our wonderful age its real greatness will be found to consist in its passion for work. Our age has been neither an age of Pericles nor a Renascence. We cannot lay claim to the literary and poetic exuberance of the Elizabethans. Our discoveries in Nature scarcely rival those of Kepler, Newton, and Copernicus. We have produced no works of art comparable to those of

Rafael, Da Vinci, Correggio, and Michael Angelo. We can boast of no such galaxy of statesmen as Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton. The luxury and splendor of our private life, thank God, is not yet comparable to the luxury of Rome under the Empire, or of France before the ax fell. But on the other hand, in no century history records has so much work been done. No age has witnessed so many useful inventions that make life easier and better. In no age has the advance and diffusion of knowledge been so rapid or so general. Not one has planned such gigantic tasks, with so much sanity, or executed them with more unflinching courage. As one wanders to-day through the city of New York and observes the marvels of engineering and architecture created during the past decade, one would suppose that a race greater than man had been at work there.

All this has not failed to react upon the character of the workman. This concentrated and immense energy is perhaps the best trait of our national character. It is that which has prevented the permanent establishment in America of those privileged and leisured classes that have done so much to retard the progress and the morality of other lands. In this country a leisured class without the inherited dignity of great deeds or traditions or ideals has always seemed to be slightly absurd. In this land of great opportunities the mere idler is felt to be a parasite on our civilization. We have no place for him and he must go. This is the secret of the short life of so many typical American

families which begin gloriously and end in ignominy. The father sets out with no other capital than health, character, intelligence and courage to found the family fortune. The son inherits his father's wealth and devotes his life to squandering it. The grandson is forced to begin again at the bottom of the ladder without money, constitution, or character. Let us hope that there will be be no great-grandson.

Work dignifies life and saves us from many of its worst evils. No man knows what it is in him to do until he measures himself against some great task. It is in his work that a man finds himself, becomes himself, and utters himself, so that though dead he yet speaketh. Think for a moment of the Shakespeare we know in his work and the Shakespeare we know outside his work. It is not to the poor player of the Globe Theater that we bow down, or to the "pleasant Willy" of "Whites," or to the householder of Stratford, but to the consummate artist, the patient workman, to the man who in discovering himself revealed to us ourselves forever.

So, in our varying measure, it is with us all. Our work calls for our best. In rising to its demands we become our best. Through the self-sacrifice and eternal vigilance our work imposes on us we become courageous, calm, energetic, active, free. Our work saves us. Our work is a mediator and a redeemer: a mediator with the higher world of the mind, a redeemer from an empty or wasted life. It imposes on us a sacred obligation to be and to remain our best. We will not prostitute the powers we have consecrated

to a noble task in which we ourselves believe. Go to the student dreaming of fame; go to the man of affairs as he sits, perhaps anxious and perplexed, guarding not only his own interests, but the interests of an entire community; go to the lawyer, elaborating the argument on which the honor of a family hangs, or to the inventor and discoverer, or to the surgeon, and invite them to a life of dissipation and pleasure, and from them all you will receive the same answer: "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down."

There comes to so many men and women a time when life no longer interests them. They have tasted of its first pleasures and know what they are worth. They have done the same things so many times that they are tired. Their early ideals for some reason not having been converted into living realities have returned to God who gave them. The impetus, the spring of life is lost, and they drift sadly and miserably to and fro, not knowing nor much caring whither they are going, but conscious ever of bitter disappointment and sorrow over the dullness and insipidity of life from which they once hoped so much. Some resolutely mine the last vein of youth and then try to live on the recollection of their lost treasures. Some ask themselves "Is life worth living?" and prove to themselves by fatally easy arguments that it is not, while some content themselves with merely railing at God and Providence.

This ennui, this "disease of forty years" that is fast becoming a disease of thirty years, perhaps the most

formidable symptom of our aging civilization, can be met and overcome by judicious habits of work. There is one class of men, at all events, who are not exposed to it. They are the great toilers for whom life is all too short. Just as Antæus derived fresh strength from every contact with his mother Earth, so they remain ever young, ever strong, by their ever-renewed labors. Plato, St. Paul, Dante, Balzac, Darwin found life worth living. They found it full of joy, full of growing wonder and charm, as their eyes were gradually opened to its meaning. The green and glorious old age of a Homer, a Goethe, a Verdi, and a Richard Wagner proves to us over and over again that there are no fixed and necessary limits to human progress and human achievement. They are our best intimations of immortality.

But now the practical question arises, how are we to find such a work as I have been describing? Man's desire is to create, but few of us apparently can do this. Few of us are creative artists, few of us are original thinkers, or poets, or writers who can derive a constant joy from the mere flow of noble and exalted thoughts. Moreover, few indeed of us are free to engage in those tasks which seem to us most attractive. But, on the contrary, we are all bound by countless ties and, for the most part, to very prosaic or petty callings. Is there, then, no chance for us to escape from the tyranny of a mean and narrow lot? Or is this and are all similar calls to a large, free, and happy life but the invitation of the free wind to the chained prisoner, or the impotent call of the false miracle-

worker to the lame man to rise and walk, after he has stolen the cripple's crutches?

What, then, are the conditions of a really great work? I think there are only two one need consider. It must be large and it must be varied. It must be large. A large and simple idea is always fertile. It will bear much fruit. It must be so large that we cannot outgrow it, large enough to accompany us our whole life long, and to grow with our growth, and to present us problems we cannot solve and possibilities we can never hope to exhaust. It must reveal itself to us as the most beautiful of ideals, but as an ideal capable of daily realization. It must walk with us by day and sweetly rest beside us at night. It must be so great that we ourselves believe in it and are willing to sink and lose ourselves in it, confident that in the end we shall find ourselves and something more than ourselves by it and through it. It must be something that can evoke our holiest purpose and stir our deepest compassion and nerve us to meet and overcome all dangers and obstacles and bring us to our knees in thankfulness and awe. Nothing less than this can permanently satisfy us. But such an object as this can be found only in humanity, in a mingling of the divine with the human—God, the divine life, revealed in humanity, and humanity revealed, beautified and transfigured in the light of God and of Christ.

In the next place, a great work must be varied. The human heart is changeable in its desires, changeable in its attachments. We change and grow and

our work must change and grow with us. Otherwise it will soon cease to interest us. But if I have made my meaning plain thus far it will not be difficult to perceive that this condition of endless change and inexhaustible richness is supplied by humanity with Christ at its head and by humanity alone. Among the countless myriads of human beings who have lived there are no two alike. And even in that limited number of men and women we know, or in one man or woman, for that matter, what mystery, what endless mingling of forces, what heights and depths, what an infinite background, what unsuspected roots stretching away into the unseen, uniting the soul to God!

He who has once realized this thought of humanity resting in God and his relation to it has surely found his work in life. It is a work we all can do, for with this humanity we are all united. We are a part of it, for it has made us what we are, and we are nothing without it. Humanity is always beautiful, though it is not always equally beautiful. But in Jesus Christ it is perfectly beautiful. Ah, how he loved it! And we cannot escape from it and separate ourselves from its joys and sorrows and refuse to share its hopes and longings, its infinite tragedy and pathos, without losing all that binds us to Jesus and makes us really human. And, on the other hand, it is when I let my life go out in love and goodness to my fellow-men that the life of Jesus and the possibilities of my own nature are revealed to me as I never saw them before. In losing myself I find myself and something greater and better than myself.

Religion now becomes to me a reality, whether it is the willing surrender of the soul to God or the constant revelation of God to the soul: the lifting of the finite up to the infinite or the vision and realization of the infinite in the finite. The bond is broken and I am free. God no longer seems to me a mere name, a faint, far-off idea, but the reality in whom I live and move and have my being, as He reveals Himself to me more fully day by day in the hitherto unknown, unsuspected sweetness of doing good. The bonds, I say, of my poor, narrow personal life are broken, and I am free. Free to rise above the conditions of a mean and narrow lot, free to enter into the wide, deep, absorbing life of humanity, and by and through humanity into the life of God. In working for humanity we find our opportunity. We can satisfy our most imperious desire to create something which shall endure. In this sense women are the truest creators, for they create humanity itself.

Lastly, let us remember the good advice of Nehemiah, to do our work before we attempt to criticize it. Work done speaks for itself. All the criticism in the world cannot undo it. Criticism, on the other hand, is good and useful provided it is intended to help, not to discourage us. But to the invitations of all Cassandras and prophets of evil, to all who would disgust us with life, discourage and enervate us, we will give the fine and temperate answer of the brave old layman, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down."

V

JUSTICE AND MERCY

Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old?

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?—Micah vi: 6, 7, 8.

CERTAINLY this is one of the great passages of Holy Writ. Persons who question the inspiration of the Bible should calculate, if they are able, the part played by these words in the progress of the human soul. It is not Micah who asks this question, it is man's conscience. Wherewith shall I appear before God? That is the question which we all, amid our apparent indifference, our secret sins, our frequent failings, are asking ourselves every day. That is the question, the question of all questions, which men have asked themselves in the silent palpitating depths of their hearts ever since they learned that there is a holy God before whom they must appear. And Micah faithfully notes and superbly answers the various expedients men have proposed to themselves.

1. Can God be bought off with a gift? God has blessed me in many ways, or sometimes I am candid enough to say my own shrewdness and industry have blessed me. I have much goods laid up for many years. If I keep them all to myself perhaps the dark Power up there will envy me so much happiness and send some sweeping misfortune on me. It might be prudent to propitiate Him with the gift of a part, that I may tranquilly enjoy the rest. So argued the ancients. They were always afraid of the jealousy of the gods. So Amasis, King of Egypt, renounced his alliance with the famous Polycrates for the sole reason that the amazing good fortune of Polycrates which never met with any disaster was sure to incur the envy of the gods. Polycrates admitted the justice of this reasoning, took his most cherished possession, an exquisite seal ring, and threw it into the sea. The gods, however, declined the tardy gift, and returned it to the tyrant in the stomach of a fish, and over all his splendor he saw the sword of fate suspended by a hair. He was decoyed to the mainland and crucified by his enemy. The gods had avenged themselves.

> Let no mortals dare to be
> Happier in their lives than we.
> Thus the jealous gods decree.

Even this crude superstition has not wholly disappeared. People still imagine that God begrudges them happiness, that if they would be well-pleasing to Him they must be at least a little miserable. So some good

men renounce the innocent pleasures of this life with the sole expectation of rendering themselves more acceptable to the Deity. The mother says, "My children have not been ill this winter," and taps on wood, hoping vaguely to disarm the jealousy of the spirit who heard her speak.

2. Or, men have a sincere wish to give something to God. They feel in their hearts that they owe Him something for the innumerable blessings he has liberally poured out upon them. They do not wish to be ungrateful. They ask themselves sometimes, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God?" They feel that they owe something, but not all. Not themselves, not the consecration of their mind with all its superb faculties, their heart with all its love. Hardly that. But there are the thousands of rams herded in Chicago and Kansas City, and the ten thousand rivers of oil, which nowadays flow in pipe-lines. Some of these, perchance, may please the Lord and wipe out my obligation to the eternal God. I will not give myself, I will not do justly nor love mercy, but I will build a church; I will found a college and call it after my name; I will convert the heathen and be a philanthropist. Well and good! That man has certainly taken some steps in the right way. He has advanced as far as many of Micahs's contemporaries who did the same thing. I have never believed in the curse that is supposed to cling to "tainted" money. If it cannot be returned to its rightful owners let it be used for the pub-

lic good. But does that answer the prophet's tremendous question? Is it with these things, after all—our hospitals, our churches, our gifts, and presents—that we shall confidently present ourselves before Him who has taught us that the wealth of the world in His eyes is as nothing in comparison with the value of one soul? It is not with these, not with wealth and splendor, not with purple and fine linen and a retinue of servants and the traditions of a proud family that we shall appear in the presence of our Maker. Ere that time comes all these things will have become as less than nothing. Not with these, but in our own persons, with our infinite capacity for happiness and misery, shall we stand at last before God to receive His judgment.

3. But there are times, at least there is one time, as Micah well knew, when we take a less superficial and light-hearted view of God's claim on us and of what we owe to God. It is when conscience accuses and condemns us, when God has brought to us the conviction of sin, and we feel ourselves lying under condemnation or affliction. Then we begin to estimate our worldly possessions at their true value. They may help us to forget, they cannot take away our sin. What choice treasure, what rare possession can bring peace and happiness to a burdened conscience, to a heavy, anxious heart? We feel then that God demands more at our hands than a gift. Gifts cannot atone to the dead, cannot take away another's misery and deep disgrace, cannot restore the happiness we have stolen. At such times a gift is an insult to a human being, and

will it satisfy God? We feel in our hearts that it will not. Sin demands sacrifice; but what is the nature of that sacrifice? Will it please God merely to punish me, or will He demand a more dreadful retribution, exacting His fearful penalty on those innocent beings who have loved me, believed in me, trusted me? "Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" It is true, the punishment must be borne. It is true, the innocent often suffer for the guilty, and with the guilty. But Micah here makes the eternal affirmation that what God desires is not the suffering, punishment, and death of the sinner, but his happiness and life; that if God sends punishment it is not to destroy us, but to wean us from the evil that would destroy us; that the only sacrifice God asks of us is not the sacrifice of our first-born, but the sacrifice of ourselves; that the only atonement we can make to Him is to do better, and that we wound God more by our remorse and despair than we wounded Him by our sin. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Among those who have blessed and benefited their kind the just man assuredly is not the least. The Christian religion, preoccupied with its vast themes of love, sin, and redemption, has attached less importance to justice than did many of the religions of antiquity; or rather, Christianity set up so high an ideal that it despaired of the possibility of man's righteousness and

depended on God to justify him for his faith, rather than by reason of his imperfect performance. And yet, while admitting all this, we can take pleasure in the Old Testament ideal of the just man who walks before God confident of his own integrity, in the Psalmist who honestly said: "Save me, O God, for I am holy. I have walked before Thee in innocency." St. Paul, who declared himself the chief of sinners, doubtless represents a higher type of conscience, but there is also something grand and sustaining in the character of Job, who, aware of his own rectitude, declined to admit himself guilty of sins he was not conscious of committing, and who refused to lower his head in the presence of his judge. In every community its idealists, who, carried away by the thought of what men and nations should be, passionately accuse their day and generation, are men of the highest value. But we also reserve our gratitude and admiration for those men of action who obey orders, do their duty as they see it, are faithful to trusts, flinch not before painful duties and who, having acted according to their lights, are satisfied with themselves, and take no shame for what they have not done. When Goethe was presented to the Emperor Napoleon, in the hour of Germany's deep humiliation, Napoleon, with his usual rudeness, said to him, "Ha! I presume you think yourself a great man." "Sire," said the noble poet, "when I think of what man ought to be, no: but" (looking Bonaparte straight in the eye) "when I compare myself with other men, yes." Of Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth, we read

that he was a just man. Who knows the effect of his justice on the character of the Saviour of the world? And to-day, amid the public and private corruptions of modern life, when all virtue is adjudged relative, and honesty largely a question of opportunity, who can estimate the value of the just, the upright, the four-square man, the man who must be convinced but who cannot be bought, terrified, tempted into evil courses? Fenimore Cooper drew for us one such character in his Natty Bumppo. Nature created another in Abraham Lincoln. And that is what, first of all, the Lord requires of thee—to do justly. No man can please God, no man's gift, no man's repentance shall be accepted of God who is not willing to give up crooked ways. With nothing less than this can we come before the Lord and bow ourselves before the High God—namely, the intention to lead an honest and upright life.

> Only the actions of the just
> Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.

But in human nature every virtue is limited, limited by the claims of other virtues. So it has frequently been said that any virtue pushed to an extreme becomes a vice. Abraham Lincoln was a just man; but if he had been merely a just man would he be enshrined as he is to-day in the hearts of his people? Aristides of Athens also was a just man, and after holding important public offices all his life died so poor that he did not leave enough to pay for his funeral. Yet he was banished by the Athenians from the city he had

gloriously saved, his fellow-citizens avowing that they were tired of hearing him called "the Just." And that is the fate of most just men who are merely just. We honor the noble integrity of Lincoln, but we love him for his mercy, for his inability to hate an enemy. We remember his magnanimity, his alacrity to pardon the poor soldier, exhausted by the long day's labor and overtaken by sleep. We think of his love for children, his exquisite letters of sympathy and condolence with the bereaved. It is the man who is merely just that has made justice hated. Who that has lived in New England does not know this type of man—hard, proud, inflexible himself, and unable to make the least allowance for the weaknesses of others? His son displeases him, he is brutally scourged and runs away from home. The little ones obey, but only from fear, and the mother's chief business in life is interposing her love between her children and the severity of her husband. And yet often in these granite natures there is a vein of tenderness and deep love that seldom or never comes to the surface, which the man carefully conceals as a weakness, not knowing that in the frosty smile, remembered after he is dead, lay his real power. To leave an example of a just life is much, but to mingle justice with mercy as God mingles it, to let the respect of our children lose itself in love, is what most of us desire.

What was the power of Jesus Christ? Did it merely consist in the fact that he was a just man and habitually did right? Do we not almost lose sight of the

justice of his character in the presence of a higher quality that transcends justice, and that enabled him to utter words and to pass judgments that the merely just man would not dare to utter and to pass? "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more." And is it not his compassionate love, despairing of no sinner, excluding none, that has drawn to him millions whom justice could never win, and that has given us our new conception of the love of God? Yet in Jesus mercy was never at variance with justice. The severest moralist, Immanuel Kant, could find nothing to condemn either in Christ's own life or in his judgments of the lives of others. On the contrary, it was Jesus' intense love for men that enabled him to enter so deeply into their motives, weaknesses, and temptations as to do absolute justice to their conduct.

If Micah's first command is to do justly, and his second to love mercy, his last is to walk humbly with thy God. The man who has really tried to do the first and the second, will not find it difficult to do the third. For, after all, our highest righteousness is not so high, our deepest compassion is not so pure in its unselfishness as to give us much occasion to boast before God or man. When we reflect on what the sins of our life, both of omission and commission, have been, when we remember how much above our worth we are habitually rated by those who love us, when we recognize that we owe most of the best that is in us not to our own excellence but

to the goodness of others and to the Providence of God, we are not tempted to lift our heads too high nor to look down from the lofty height of an imaginary virtue on the weaknesses and shortcomings of other people. If forty years' acquaintance with our own nature has taught us nothing else, it ought to have taught us humility and charity for others. If the sorrows, the mistakes, and failures of our life have not taught us this lesson it must have been because we were strangely slow to learn it. "To walk humbly with thy God"—that is the end of all our virtue. When smitten to the earth, to raise our eyes to Heaven; to be able to look up to God and feel Him near, to feel that the past is forgiven and passed into His mighty keeping; to believe that His kind, fatherly eye rests with approbation upon our life—that is peace of conscience and joy of conscience and true eternal blessedness. "And what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?" That is all, and that is enough.

VI

THE HEALING OF NAAMAN

Now Naaman, Captain of the host of the King of Syria, was a great man with his master and honorable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper.
—II Kings v: 1.

THE story of Naaman and Elisha is one of the most vigorous and perfect stories related in the Bible. In fact it would be hard to point to another narrative of equal length which contains such a wealth of human interest. Neither De Maupassant nor Balzac has been able to paint so many vigorous figures on so small a canvas. The little maid, Naaman, the King of Israel, and the King of Syria, Elisha, Gehazi, and Naaman's friendly servant are all drawn with vigor and much individuality. The narrative which recounts Naaman's visit to Elisha is very old, probably not much younger than the adventure itself. The incident appears to be historical and not mythical or allegorical.

Naaman, in spite of his pride and quick temper, is a very lovable person, a brave, courteous, well-bred man. He is described as a successful soldier, a mighty man of valor, rich and honorable and in high favor with his master by reason of the victories that have

attended his arms. His life had been crowned by high success. Fortune had smiled on him, he was happily married and was loved by his dependents. But with all his good fortune that perverse principle which seems ever to thwart man's efforts to be happy had managed to instil a drop of poison into his cup of joy which made its contents bitter, for he was afflicted with that mysterious scourge which in the Bible is called leprosy. His leprosy, however, does not seem to have been of the severe, contagious and incurable type, otherwise he would not have been permitted to mingle freely with his fellow-men. Elisha's refusal to meet him did not spring from fear of infection, but from his prophet's pride, which refused to humble itself before the great ones of the earth. Gehazi's leprosy was not communicated by Naaman, unless it was contracted from the garments he had purloined, for at the time of his meeting with Naaman, Naaman is described as well. Nevertheless, like all skin affections, Naaman's malady was a sore burden, so heavy that he was ready to snatch at any hope of relief.

Now let us go on to the story. In the course of their innumerable border raids the Syrian troops had carried off a young Hebrew girl whom Naaman had appropriated and presented to his wife. This child, with the peculiar adaptiveness of her people, soon made herself at home in Naaman's house and gained the confidence of the family. One day while mistress and maid were engaged in a chat over domestic matters Naaman's health was mentioned and the little slave expressed her

strong conviction that if her master could meet the great prophet of Samaria he would be cured of his leprosy.

How willing our friends are to prescribe for us in our sicknesses, and how quick we often are to accept the most extraordinary suggestions! Naaman had barely heard of Elisha, and he knew nothing of the means the prophet had at his disposal for the treatment of leprosy; and yet no sooner was his little slave's faith mentioned to him than he hastened to set out for Samaria. Nor did he go unannounced. Born and bred a politician, he knew the value of what people nowadays call influence. He went to the King of Syria, probably Ben Hadad, told him of his hopes and asked for a letter of introduction, which the King readily wrote. Neither Naaman nor Ben Hadad knew much about miracles, but they did know how things are done in the great world. All that seemed necessary to them was that Naaman, properly accredited, should present himself before the King of Israel, and the King, desirous to oblige his powerful neighbor, would either effect the cure himself or he would give the order to his subject to work the necessary miracle. "Now then," said the Syrian King, complacently, "when this letter is come unto thee, behold I have herewith sent Naaman my servant unto thee that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy."

In Israel, however, miracles were not worked at the order of kings, as Ahab and his successors well knew. This letter, therefore, put the King into a curious

predicament. It affected him as a similar letter coming from the King of England would affect President Wilson, though in an earlier administration there would have been no embarrassment. After reading it with extreme astonishment the King rent his clothes: "Am I God to kill or to make alive that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, how he seeketh a quarrel against me." Elisha's behavior, at this juncture, shows a fine sense of confidence in himself and in his power: "Wherefore," said he, "hast thou rent thy clothes? Let him now come unto me and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." His treatment of Naaman is very interesting. He did not go forth to meet the illustrious patient and help him to alight from his chariot. Nor did he advise Naaman to stay in his vicinity for several months. Strange to say, he did not attempt to treat Naaman at all, nor stand and call upon his God for help. Nor did he seek to inspire Naaman's faith, except by the positive assurance that his water-cure would succeed. He merely sends Naaman a message, abrupt and almost rude in form and apparently absurd in character. "Go wash in Jordan seven times." Little wonder that the high-spirited and testy soldier was deeply wounded and went away without the slightest intention of trying the prophet's prescription. Is this the reception due to a man of his rank and character? Is this a proper and courteous response to the bearer of the great Syrian King's letter? Elisha certainly has not a good bedside man-

ner. And what an absurd injunction! If this great act of healing is to be performed by the power of God why not solemnly supplicate God to do it? Or if bathing in running water is the proper treatment for leprosy, what was the need of going to Samaria? "Are not Abana and Pharpar," the deep and limpid rivers of Damascus, "better than all the waters of Israel? So he went away in a rage." It is as if one of us, believing himself seriously ill, at great pains and expense should take a long journey to consult a celebrated physician, and after a cursory examination he should say: "You need no treatment from me. Bathe regularly, take more exercise, eat and drink less and go to bed at ten o'clock, and you will be perfectly well." Elisha, however, presented no bill.

One of the privileges of good men is to be loved by their servants. Naaman to a marked degree possessed the affections of his dependents. Another of his servants now approaches him and respectfully and affectionately addresses him in these wise words, which have served as a text for thousands of sermons. "My father, if the prophet had bid thee to do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather, then, when he saith unto thee, Wash and be clean." With these words Naaman's anger, as quick to fade as it was to blaze, disappears. His good sense prevails over his disappointment. Since he has come so far to obtain this physician's advice he will follow it.

"Then he went down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God,

and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child and he was clean." As to the means by which this wonderful cure was effected I know no more than you do. The general character of this narrative, as I have said, seems to be historical and truthful and not far removed in point of time from the event. As is the case with most ancient miracles of healing, the diagnosis is too slight to permit us to judge what actually took place. The etiology of true leprosy is still a matter of dispute. The ancients regarded it as a constitutional affection induced by bad diet, especially by the consumption of partially decayed fish. Many modern physicians believe leprosy to be a germ disease, whose bacillus they have identified. For thousands of years it has been pronounced incurable, though to-day the claim is made that cases of true leprosy have been successfully treated in New Orleans and elsewhere. Rationalism, as usual, is ready with its more or less plausible argument. It is possible to distinguish several forms of leprosy in the Old Testament, some of which, like that of Miriam, the sister of Moses, are only temporary and are curable. Naaman evidently suffered from a lighter non-contagious form of the disease or he would not have been permitted freely to mingle with his fellow-men. Elisha's command to dip seven times in Jordan may be understood to mean, according to Hebrew usage, to bathe repeatedly or frequently. In specifying the Jordan the prophet may also have indicated one of the healing, medicinal springs along its course. The powerful hope awakened in Naaman's

breast would doubtless facilitate his recovery. Moreover, if Elisha could communicate the disease to Gehazi through the mind he might remove it from Naaman by the same means. So those who are impressed with the lifelike veracity of this narrative may be disposed to accept it without recourse to thaumaturgy, while those to whom miracles are acceptable will gladly welcome this miracle.

Now let us proceed. Naaman was not like nine of the ten lepers who were healed by Jesus. When he saw that he was cured his heart was full of gratitude and he returned to the prophet's residence, a distance of thirty miles. His first act was the confession of the God by whose servant he had been healed. "And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and stood before him and said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel." This is very interesting. Naaman was an early pragmatist. Elisha had entered into no argument with him. He had not tried to convince Naaman's reason of the truth of his religion. Naaman was still far from the conception of the one universal God whose power is over all the earth. Yet he is willing to deny his own gods and to worship Jehovah. Why? The answer is plain, it is as clear as day. He had received a great blessing through the religion of Jehovah, a blessing which he acknowledges by making Jehovah his God. People may argue as much as they please, but the fact stands. The practical motive in religion is a real and powerful motive. Men believe because it is good to believe.

The greater the good religion bestows upon men the more they believe in it, and the less good any form of faith does men the less faith it is able to inspire. Naaman had previously believed in the gods of his people and they had not helped him. While adoring them he was a leper. Now he was cured by the religion of Jehovah, and he accepted that religion. That was as far as his reasoning went and it is as far as most persons' reasoning goes.

Naaman, in setting out for Samaria, had not come empty-handed. He had brought with him in gold, silver, and raiment a small fortune, amounting in ancient currency to about fifty thousand dollars, but according to its present purchasing power probably worth ten times that sum. It is noticeable that Naaman made no allusion to this costly gift before he was cured. He did not offer it to the prophet as a fee or even as an incentive to do his best. He offered it as a gentleman would, as an expression of gratitude. "Now, therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant." The question of receiving payment for great personal services rendered to men has always been a mooted one. In Israel there was no prejudice against the payment of prophets for their services. When Saul asked the help of Samuel he came with the money in his hand. People also were in the habit of entertaining the prophets in chambers built for that purpose, and of sending them presents of the fruits of the earth very much as they do to-day. One feels that there are services which cannot be paid for by money. Yet in some way the worker must be

supported by his work in order that he may be free to do it. Socrates refused to accept a reward for his instruction, and Xantippe and her children suffered privations which did not improve Xantippe's temper or her respect for the philosopher's vocation. Paul declared that he would rather die than that any man should make his boasting void that he lived by his own labor; yet he declared that the laborer is worthy of his hire. The illustrious Dr. Howe felt himself precluded from the practice of his profession by the fact that he could not bring himself to accept fees from his patients. Yet I believe that he accepted a salary from an institution. On the other hand, a sentiment of gratitude is natural to all right-minded persons, and the ingratitude which accepts all and gives nothing is one of the bitterest experiences of those who are trying to help their fellow-men. Many persons are so situated that the only return they can make for benefits received is a gift of money. At all events, I may lay it down as a principle that persons who have been blessed and helped by an institution are under obligation to sustain and extend that institution, the more so if it does its work freely for God's sake and makes no other claim than a moral claim. Exactly why Elisha refused Naaman's gift we do not know. He declared that it was not a time to receive rich and costly presents. Perhaps it was a time of graft and corruption to which he wished to set an example of disinterested service. Perhaps he preferred to have Naaman and the King of Syria see that the gift of God was without money and without price.

Naaman's offering was not intended for the service of God, nor that other men might be healed free of charge, nor to extend the work. It was a personal present to Elisha, a fortune which he declined to receive. "And he said, as the Lord liveth before whom I stand; I will not receive it. And he urged him, but he refused."

But, unfortunately, Elisha had an assistant, a familiar spirit, a subtle and inventive person named Gehazi. Gehazi's master passion was covetousness. His eye sparkled with pleasure when he saw the long string of asses and camels with their fine trappings, bearing rich fabrics and little bags filled with gold and silver, drawn up before his master's door. And when he heard Elisha's refusal and saw the caravan carrying its precious cargo move away he could not conceal his annoyance. "Surely," said he, "my master hath spared Naaman, this Syrian, in not receiving from his hands that which he brought. But as the Lord liveth, I will run after him and take somewhat of him." So fast did Gehazi run that he soon overtook the camels hastening to their home. Naaman saw him pursuing and respectfully descended from his chariot and inquired "Is all well?" As soon as Gehazi recovered his breath he poured into Naaman's ear a story which has served as a model for many others. Elisha has not changed his purpose. He, Gehazi, makes no demand for himself. But there are some poor clergymen for whom Elisha would like the modest sum of two thousand dollars and two suits of clothes. "My master has sent me, saying even now there be come unto me from

Mt. Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets. Give me, I pray thee, a talent of silver and two changes of raiment." The liberal Syrian, who probably perfectly understood the transaction, assented and urged on him twice that amount of money and the desired raiment.

On returning to the prophet's house Gehazi bestowed his treasures in a safe place and came and stood before his master as usual. But prophets ought to be served by honest people. Simple and unsophisticated as they are in the ways of the world, their eyes are terribly quick to behold falsehood and wrong. "And Elisha said, Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" And Gehazi made that famous answer which has been echoed in all ages by the Church: "Thy servant went no whither." "And he said, went not mine heart with thee? Is it a time to receive money and to receive garments, and olive yards and vineyards and sheep and oxen and men servants and maid servants? The leprosy, therefore, of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and thy seed forever. And he went out of his presence a leper as white as snow." Poor Gehazi! He was terribly punished for his wrong-doing. Perhaps Elisha judged him too harshly. After all, he was the servant. It was his business to see that the prophet was properly clad and that he enjoyed two meals a day long after the ravens had ceased to feed him, and perhaps Gehazi had intended to lay Naaman's present away in order that he might have the pleasure of bringing it forth before the prophet on a rainy day.

There are two other incidents that I must briefly allude to. When Elisha refused Naaman's gift, Naaman replied by making a singular request: "Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth, for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offerings nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord." Why did Naaman wish to carry back with them these two mules' burdens of earth? Because he in common with the rest of the world believed that every country has its own god who in some way is attached to the soil of that country. By standing on Israelitish soil in Syria he hoped to be able to commune with Israel's God.

Again, Naaman plainly foresees the difficulties and embarrassments which will attend his change of faith, especially in his relations with his royal master, and he asks the prophet's moral guidance in the deepest and most pathetic words of our chapter: "In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant that when my master goeth to the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon: the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing." Naaman was doing a most unusual thing, and he was beset by unusual difficulties. In antiquity people did not personally change their religion. They worshiped their country's gods, and he who did not do so was regarded as a public enemy. Men worshiped as their fathers worshiped, and every country had its own gods and temples. Hence for an individual to espouse a foreign faith and to set himself in opposition

to the religion of his people exposed him to grave danger. Some degree of conformity was necessary if he would remain at home while worshiping a strange god, and Naaman promised himself inward allegiance to the faith he had adopted and only outward conformity to the religious customs and traditions of his people. With this Elisha seems to be satisfied and he said unto him, "Go in peace." I once heard Dr. Henry van Dyke, preaching on this subject, say, this was only a farewell salutation, "good-by, Naaman," *i.e.*, the prophet's refusal to answer a question which Naaman must answer for himself. But the words, I think, mean more. They mean this. The Lord will pardon you for this thing. Go in peace! Go back to your old life with your new faith, and do the best you can.

VII

THE ILLUSIONS OF LIFE

And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.—Hebrews xl: 39, 40.

IN this wonderful chapter on faith the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews briefly records the lives of the greatest men and women of his nation. If we would know what faith is we must know what such men and women were. Two qualities, like shining threads, run through their histories. Two characteristics are common to them all. All were men of the future, all dissatisfied with the world as it is and engaged in a struggle against it. All had the vision of something higher, mightier, more satisfying yet to come, which they proclaimed with loud and joyful voices, a vision for which they lived and which separated them forever from men who are satisfied with themselves and with things as they are. And these men of faith, believing in the future, created the future. By their discontent with the sordidness and injustice of life as it is they created a life more worthy of men and a humanity more worthy of living. That is the first note of their character; the second is that their insistence

on the ideal brought them into conflict with the actual. Their condemnation of the world awoke the deepest animosity of the world and made their lives a tragic struggle followed in many instances by a more tragic death. The author of this Epistle, whom we know not, lived in the first century, and his purview extended only to the Jewish people. But had he lived in the twentieth century and had his wide glance included all the saints and heroes, the thinkers and discoverers of all time, his recital would not have been materially different. What was true of men of faith then has been true ever since. Their story has been about the same in all centuries. Now the world has regarded their great services with cruel indifference; now it has repaid their love with stakes and crosses, and the old signs of power have never been wanting. Homer, too, must wander like a beggar through the cities of Greece in his lifetime. Socrates must drink the hemlock; Joan of Arc must expire in the flames for the glory of having saved France; Galileo must recant and abjure his own discoveries; Raleigh must languish in prison; Columbus must return home in chains; Henry Hudson was cast adrift in an open boat, to perish in the vast sea that bears his name; Lincoln must fall by an assassin's bullet: they were all disappointed, and not one obtained the thing that he hoped for. Abraham received the promise of Canaan, the lot of his inheritance, but the only portion of the land which he possessed at his death was the burial-place which he had purchased from the children of Heth. Moses led

his people through the wilderness, but was not permitted to enter the promised land. Yet the strange thing about all these children of God is that they did not die in despair, but hoped on to the end. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." They received not the promises. God had revealed to them a future of splendid usefulness, of reciprocated love, of brilliant fame; and apparently He had broken His promise. But they knew it not and trusted to the end. Their reward had been only hard labor, distrust, neglect, or scoffing, yet they did not find life evil and expressed no disgust of it. And by their lives they have consecrated life, and their deeds have reared the temple of humanity. For whatever reason we have of loving life and of glorying in humanity we have chiefly received through them. This, then, I conceive to be the principle of all life. It is based on illusion. It promises us many things that it cannot possibly perform. But to the faithful heart it is no deception and no mockery. It may deceive us in regard to the nature of our reward, but that is only because we have set our hope too low and are too impatient.

The immediate reward of Jesus' life seems to be the whipping-post of Pilate and the nails of the Cross; but his reward has been flowing in for nineteen hundred years, and it will continue to flow.

Life is an illusion. What else is this universe, which

seems so solid, yet can be so readily dissolved by the thought of man? Apart from a seeing eye, a hearing ear, an understanding mind, what is it? Nothing that we can recognize. What is the vehicle that unites and brings to us all those sights, sounds, perfumes, contacts that are the creation of our senses? and without the co-operation of our senses what would remain? We cannot imagine. To us the universe is an apparition, the cause of our sensations; but what it is in itself we shall probably never know.

Life is an illusion because, while we constantly work for the future, we have no power to read the future. With us all, the least and the greatest, the future is a matter of faith, not of knowledge. We may believe in it, we may appeal to it, but we cannot tell whether it will bring forth the crowning or the destruction of all our hopes. While we think we are working for one thing we usually discover that we are working for something else. At one time in my life I spent seven years in a fine library, with little to do but read, and I expected to become a scholar. I have never become a scholar, and I have forgotten nearly all that I used to know. But I have found employment for the knowledge I possess which I little anticipated, and had I been informed beforehand what my work in life was to be I could hardly have been better guided in my reading. The boy plays, as Robertson says, because he enjoys playing. But in his play he is training his muscles and his nervous system and disciplining his mind for the serious business of life. He studies to

satisfy his parents, to gain the approbation of his masters, to excel other boys: but these are not the real rewards of his efforts. They are of a totally different character, rewards which while he was a child would have been no incentive at all. A man toils all his life to accumulate a fortune. He succeeds, but his success is a very different thing from that which he expected. By the time what he used to regard as success is come he probably has no time and no power to enjoy it. As he looks back over his life with all its trials and anxieties and unending labors he realizes that what he calls his fortune is not his reward at all. That has come little by little in the work he has done, in the improvement of his faculties, in his increased power to do good to others, and in the love and satisfaction this has brought him, probably also in a few simple pleasures which a poor man might have commanded just as easily. If he has had these rewards he is satisfied. If he has missed them his wealth is no compensation for them. When America was discovered it was not discovered by men who were looking for a new world. They were looking for a new passage to India and China, and the mighty continent that they brought to light seemed only to block their way. The early colonists of this country little dreamed of founding a great empire: they sought an opportunity to earn a bare livelihood. They came to escape political oppression and religious tyranny. Their utmost hope was to enjoy religious liberty and the privilege of supporting their families by hard work.

And they all died without an intimation of what they had done, or of the new life for men which should spring from their humble beginnings. All illusion! In every case a reward quite different from that which they expected or sought.

So, to cite the greatest of all examples, our Lord Jesus Christ believed that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. Neither he nor any of his followers seems to have realized the weary time that must elapse before the power of sin is broken, the divine dénouement comes, and the will of God is done on earth as it is in Heaven. He said, in words which sparkle like diamonds and which across the ages thrill with the intense emotion of his expectation, "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death until they shall see the Kingdom of Heaven come with power." He despatched his Disciples in haste to make the final announcement, commanding them to take no staff nor shoes for the journey, and to salute no man by the way. "Go not into the way of the Gentiles and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. Verily I say unto you, before ye shall have gone over the cities of Judah the Son of Man shall come." He voluntarily laid down his life to usher in the Kingdom, and that Kingdom in the sense of the approach of the end of the world: and the visible appearance of Christ seems as remote as ever. Yet the Kingdom of God came, and it came through Christ's death. His only miscalculation was that he underestimated the stupendousness of the transaction and the time that it would

take to conclude it. Yet he candidly confessed his ignorance of the day and the hour. The task was greater than he at first believed. Instead of merely revealing to men the perfect life and waiting for God to create a perfect environment of that life from Heaven, it was God's will that He should make the environment also by moral means and that that life should fulfil itself by slow growth. Instead of bringing the world to judgment and destruction God has laid upon him the greater task of renewing and transforming it. The first generations of Christians lived in daily expectation of the coming of Jesus. They greeted each other with the word "Maranatha"—the Lord is at hand. Without the mighty support of their expectation of immediate deliverance they could hardly have sustained their torments. If we would know what the early Christians thought on this subject we have only to read the marvelous and lurid pictures of Revelation.

We no longer look for the coming of Jesus in this sense. We no longer look for it, for we perceive that he is already here, not as a destroyer, not as a mere judge, but in his pure and beneficent character, as the Helper, the Consoler, and the Purifier of men, the Rectifier of wrongs. Wherever men, touched by his spirit, feel and act as he felt and acted, he is among them. "Lo, I am with you always." "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am in the midst of them."

So, from whatever point of view we look at it, there

is a vast element of illusion in human life, an element that cannot be withdrawn without sapping the mightiest springs of our action, a world to which belong all art and poetry, and music, and works of imagination, which accomplish their effects almost wholly through illusion. There are men, it is true, almost without illusion who see life, or who think they see it, in its naked ugliness exactly as it is, but they are dry branches, eunuchs which are made eunuchs of men. They can neither change the world as it is nor persuade those who behold life under the veil of illusion to surrender one of their joys. Go to the lover and point out the illusions of love and you will not cause him to relinquish them. He lives in a fairer world, he sees things you cannot see. He hears voices that are ineffable, and even though at last he wake from his dream, or is robbed of it by the cruel hand of Death, yet he has had it. He goes through life a better man, a purer and gentler and deeper man by virtue of the unutterable mystery into which he was once permitted to gaze.

After his death Jesus showed himself alive to his Disciples in the form of a few brief, impalpable visions —apparently how unimportant, how slight a thing on which to hang the future faith of mankind! And yet it sufficed to change their lives, and it is one of the foundation-stones on which the faith of the world stands to-day more securely than ever before.

And now we come to the last question: If life is so largely built on illusion, must it not inevitably end in disillusion? In one sense, yes. Seldom does old age

retain the illusions of youth; almost never do the rewards of life correspond with the promises. But there is a great difference between men in this matter. Those who have thought chiefly about themselves and their personal profit, and the advantages which should accrue from their efforts, are apt to suffer grievous disappointment. The reward comes not, or it comes too late, when they have neither the time nor the capacity to enjoy it; or it is taken away from them, or when they receive it they feel they do not want it. He who thinks most of what he can receive through love receives least. He who thinks of what he can give receives all. These are the disillusioned, the disappointed, the embittered, who pronounce life a failure, a fraud, a system of deception, and who die without faith. And there are others who have lived not for themselves chiefly, but for the vision they have seen, for the cause that was committed to them; the men of faith, who believe in the power of truth and that nothing good can ultimately perish. The reward fails, the bright dream is not realized, but that is only because a holier, greater, better thing has come to them to which they are quite willing to surrender the less. Abraham found no continuing city, but he became the father of the faithful and he walked with God. Moses did not enter the promised land, but he delivered his people and led them to it. Jesus died on the Cross, yet he died knowing that he had given life to the world. To such, life contains no disillusions in the sense of disappointment and despair. The reward is greater

and more satisfying than they had dared to hope—that is all. For, after all, the highest happiness this life can give us is the happiness of satisfying our own inward ideal, of loving, of rising to our highest, and of using our best in the service of men. Those who are permitted to do this never complain of life and never doubt its goodness. And when we speak of illusions in the lives of such men we only mean that they divine a higher and more satisfying world than that we see, a world invisible to us, which they make visible by their lives, and even though the actual performance seem to fail, and the reward to which they confidently looked forward is withheld, that is because they have undertaken a task too great for human power, a work too long for our short life, which they must resign to others to complete, "that they without us should not be made perfect." And the reward which seems withheld is withheld because it is so great that it must follow them into eternity. So they hope on to the end, and die in faith, without receiving the promises.

I have alluded to the beneficent illusions of life. But there is one illusion in regard to life which is dangerous. It is that life is long. On the contrary, it is very short, far too short for its opportunities. Therefore, let us make haste. "What thou doest, do quickly."

VIII

THE THREE JUDGMENT SEATS

It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, when the Lord cometh who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

—I Cor. 4—First five verses.

ST. PAUL is here describing the three great tribunals which have jurisdiction over human life — self-judgment, the judgment of men, and the judgment of God. He himself seems to feel the judgment of God alone to be important. He had judged himself so often; he had heard so many times the judgments and complaints of men that he preferred now to wait and see what God would judge of him. Happy is he who escapes self-condemnation. Happy is he whom the fear of God delivers from the fear of man. And yet while we acknowledge that God's judgments alone are adequate, and that God alone passes final judgments on all human conduct, we cannot afford to forget either the judgments of conscience or the judgments of men.

That man can judge himself is the chief proof of his moral nature. If it were not for this faculty our lives

would be far serener and less troubled than they are. But conscience neither rests itself nor lets us rest. It will not be happy nor let us be happy until there is peace and harmony within our soul—peace and harmony between knowledge and faith, between thinking and doing, between yesterday and to-day, between time and eternity. It lays hold of the highest truth within its reach and compels us to live up to it or to suffer. It makes us uneasy and sorrowful until our life is in harmony with our knowledge. Nor does it hold up to us merely that which is beautiful, attractive, flattering to the soul. It compels us to recognize truths deeply humiliating to our pride. It commands us to do painful duties. It holds out no reward except peace with God and with ourselves. It addresses us with no cajoling arguments, but only with the short, solemn "You ought." Shall we not listen to its voice, and, if we do not, will God address us with any other voice? I know that men are differently constituted in this respect. There are natures loved by God which as soon as they perceive a truth embrace it and hold it fast forever. There are wills in such accord with conscience that they only have to recognize a duty to do it. But though such natures be rare, yet in a conscience man possesses something which lifts him out of the whole animal kingdom and which makes him a citizen of the eternal and spiritual world of God.

But because each of us possesses such a nature the companionship of men and women makes us something quite different from what we should be without

it. There is no more wonderful discovery in the world than the discovery of the soul of another person. We may have known that person for years in a superficial and conventional sense—known, that is, the mask that he or she presents to the world. Something occurs to remove the mask and we see the real man or woman, a totally different thing. We are admitted to the secret places of that life, and discover for what that heart beats. Life has taught me one thing—that men and women are not what they seem. They may be better or they may be worse, but they are always more interesting than they appear. There is no more steadying and sustaining knowledge than the knowledge of other spirits like ourselves, the knowledge of other souls struggling with our temptations, beset with our griefs, yet presenting a brave, untroubled front to the world. There are times when the journey is too great for us and the burdens of life are too heavy, when we find neither strength nor courage to battle for ourselves, but we can borrow strength from another and find in our love for him and his love for us a motive which is sufficient to sustain us. We are so closely bound up with others that we hardly know what to call our own. So humanity, having largely made us what we are, has a right to judge us. This world is a vast judgment hall where men and actions are forever weighed and measured and judgments are continually recorded. Look, for example, at the Stock Exchange. There is a place where the value of every man who has a value is quoted, where nations are weighed, where

consciences are discounted, where governments are measured and God Himself is appraised and pews are auctioned. "Ten years ago," said Old Osborn, in *Vanity Fair*, "Sedley was a better man than I was, better I should say by ten thousand pounds." And the judgments of the world in the long run are seldom wrong. Their chief defect is that they are prejudiced and incomplete. A man who makes large demands of his fellows and who calls on others to believe, to think, and to do otherwise than they have been accustomed is never well received. People regard him as an enemy, and he is an enemy to their old life. Only time can do justice to him. Only after death or defeat has made him harmless to the living, or signal victory has stopped men's mouths, is he valued at his true worth. So every new truth which touches life must live through a period when it is hated before it attains the period when it is loved. But as soon as a man or an act is so far removed that the passions and self-interest of men are no longer threatened they begin to judge righteously. At the time of Jesus there was a young woman who seems to have been demented. What a simple fool Pilate would have considered the man who said that the name and influence of Mary Magdalene would outlive that of the Emperor Tiberius! Yet such is the case. The further back we go the more the good and the wise stand out as the great, and the foolish and the vicious, the conventional and pompous disappear. Such are the judgments of the world. At best imperfect, because they are based

largely on ignorance and distorted by self-interest. At their worst, cold, pitiless, absurd, or, if this appears to be too strong, it will be admitted that the judgments of this world need two things to make them just—time and the absence of self-interest.

What, then, should be our attitude toward these judgments? We ought to respect them as much as we can. The man who sets himself in the face of public opinion, who adopts strange, uncouth manners, who loves to express himself in startling paradoxes, and who makes himself quaint, peculiar, a thing apart, who out of a false spirit of independence loves to trample on decent custom, is surely a little man, for he spends his life in fighting about little things. That is why a gentleman is so satisfactory. We know where to find him. One day Diogenes, the old surly Cynic who asked Alexander the Great to step outside of his sunshine, was invited to dinner by Plato, and when he reached Plato's house he began industriously to wipe the mud from his sandals on Plato's rich carpets, saying as he did so, "Thus I trample on Plato's pride." "With even greater pride, Diogenes," said the wise Plato. And if we may not violate these conventional ideas which are morally indifferent, still less may we trample on those institutions and customs which have the higher sanctions of morality, which society establishes for its own protection. Many men and women have attempted to do this and to find their happiness in defiance of the esteem and approval of their fellow-men. Few have succeeded, and they have left dangerous examples.

On the other hand, can anything be more servile and degrading than accepting the world's judgments as our only standard? Better a thousand times gruff old Diogenes than the sleek sycophant. Look at the man who cannot brook the restraint of God or of conscience, but who trembles before the judgments of this world, whose only question in regard to any principle or measure is not, is it right or true, but, is it popular? Will it succeed? See his subservience to the world's fashions, his fear of its frown, his lack of independence, his conformity to its shallow code. "Horrible," said Lord Bacon, "to fear man and to be brave toward God." The Apostle is right. He who knows the world is not tempted to pay too much heed to its immediate judgments. People seem to frown on you to-day. Why? You do not know. Probably they do not know either. Very likely it is because they are in ill humor, or they may be jealous of your happiness. Anyway, it is not worth while to stop long to ponder over it. If you are conscious of offense, acknowledge it. If not, go your way; do your work and to-morrow they may smile. He whose happiness depends on the world's smile and who cannot do his work in the face of its frown had better lay down his tools at once, for he will never accomplish anything. "Woe to you," said Jesus Christ, "when all men speak well of you. So did their fathers of the false prophets." It is enough and more than enough if God gives us the love and appreciation of a few loyal hearts which only draw closer in the hour of our adversity and protect our breasts

with the triple shield of their love which the world's malice cannot pierce. "The victorious cause pleased the gods, the lost cause pleased Cato," was the highest praise which the Roman poet, Lucan, could bestow on the man who died by his own hand rather than witness the extinction of his country's liberties.

There is a trace of this feeling in the heart of every one who lives for an ideal. Something of this contempt of the world, as Paulsen says, which is so strongly a marked feature of Christianity is experienced by every fine and noble soul. Men are not what our childish trust imagined them. Behind their beautiful mask which they know so well how to assume lurk the base impulses of a selfish soul. They pursue trivial ends and mean designs, and with the curse laid on all Lilliputian natures they ascribe the same motives to others. Serious and great thoughts only disgust them and a merciless judgment is pronounced on all who will not echo their conventional sayings. Discovering this, some men like Voltaire and Dean Swift rejoice in hurling the venom back into the world's face, in compelling the world to see its own littleness and baseness and in making it shudder at the mirror they hold up to it. Noble natures, however, like Jesus and St. Paul sorrowfully and indignantly turn away from the world's judgment and take their refuge in God, looking to Him and to their own conscience for approval and reward, yet without ceasing to labor mightily for the world's salvation. No great work has ever been done on this earth without a support that the world cannot give.

The heart cannot live without the consolation of something of which it is sure. Let us beware, then, of a peace with the world which leaves us satisfied. What men approve to-day they may condemn to-morrow, but above all the clouds of passing opinion the eternal stars keep watch above us and the darker the night the more plainly we may see them. There are and there always have been two kinds of great men in the world. There are those who, like Julius Cæsar, Napoleon, Balzac, and Bismarck, have known how to use this world. They have studied it in order to exploit it. They have organized its forces for victory, attempting colossal undertakings, but knowing that if they lived they would succeed. And there are also those "historic holy simpletons" like Elijah, John the Baptist, Judas of Galilee, and John Brown who stand alone, attempt the impossible, run their heads against stone walls, live tragically, and die as martyrs, apparently accomplishing nothing, and yet changing the world forever by virtue of what they were and by the power of an irresistible example.

So the judgments of this world are not infallible. To the man who has some respect for human nature there are few more painful exhibitions of vanity and imbecility than those sweeping, cutting judgments of men and women of whom the speaker probably knows nothing. What patient study, what sympathy and previous training are needed to judge a good book. And is a man's soul, with its secrets, its unknown sorrows and temptations, its beautiful hopes, its withering disap-

pointments, easier to read than a book where everything is put down in black and white? How many persons are there whom we feel to be competent to compose our biography or to judge of our life? And has God revealed the lives of other men to us in a vision? When I meet a man who can discern nobility in others I instinctively look for nobility in him. What are the criticisms and opinions which have helped us the most? Was it some scornful condemnation that an officious friend brought to our attention professing to think we should be glad to hear it? I hardly suppose so. "Let the righteous smite me friendly and reprove me, but let not his precious balm break my head." No greater proof of friendship can be given than a just and passionless rebuke, and yet even more helpful are those generous recognitions of excellence we dare not allow, but which help us to become what we would be. There is one person of whose judgments I am greatly afraid. That is the friend who loves and trusts me.

St. Paul ends this saying with a very beautiful thought. He turns away from the judgment of men to the judgment of God, not only because God's judgment is juster but because it is kinder. Though God knows all, though he knows more evil of us than any human being knows, He does not think more evil of us than men think. Because He knows all He can pity all. If He knows our sins He knows also our weakness and our repentance, our desire for goodness, and many a secret, too, of love and kindness and hope, on which

He looks with approbation and love. "Who shall both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of hearts." And then says St. Paul: "What is coming then? What will God's judgment be on the life He has laid bare to its inmost recesses, punishment, condemnation, annihilation?" "And then shall every man have praise of God." "Nothing but the Infinite Pity is sufficient for the infinite pathos of human life."

IX

CHRIST AT THE DOOR OF THE HEART

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.
—Revelation iii: 20.

I SUPPOSE all readers of the Bible must have been struck with the strangeness of these words in this place. Among the threats and obscure warnings John is addressing to the Seven Churches, some of which seem to us far enough removed from the sanity and sweetness of Jesus, we suddenly come to this verse and find in it something familiar and dear. It is like one ray of friendly sunshine lighting up a dark and stormy scene, or it is like the sight of our own dear flag in a foreign land. We feel at once instinctively that Jesus probably uttered these words. This little parable bears the stamp of his genius. No one else could have said so much in so little and have said it so well. This may have been one of those sayings which escaped the Evangelists, but which the author of this book remembered for forty years and recorded here. Amid the strange and brilliant masses of precious metals and dross heaped up in the Book of Revelation we seem to recognize this gem cut by the hand of Jesus

Christ as we should recognize a statue by Praxiteles or a painting of Rafael's among the works of copyists. Simple as these words are, how many hymns and paintings and religious thoughts have they not inspired! among others, Holman Hunt's "Light of the World" and "O! Jesu, Thou art standing."

The first thing which offers itself to our attention is the deep, personal love Jesus tells us, not only here, but in countless other places, he felt for men. To most other great thinkers it was enough to have loved the truth; to Jesus, that was not enough. In all his profound searchings he carried humanity in his heart. Truth had little attraction for him that he could not communicate to all mankind and that would not make men permanently better. How plainly this appears in all Christ's utterances, in the oft-repeated "Whereunto shall I liken the Kingdom of God?" Subtle, difficult, far-fetched questions which interest some minds but do not affect others were not for him. He dealt with those grand and simple themes which concern all men equally at all times. Knowledge fluctuates, manners change, generation follows generation. God and our relation to God, birth, death, sorrow, the incompleteness of human life, sin and the longing for forgiveness remain the same. So the religion of Jesus does not grow old. Sometimes in moments of deep dejection the world despairs of the ideal of Jesus and rejects it bodily. Sometimes, elated by success, carried away by its own splendid progress, the world feels that it has outgrown Christianity and spurns it. Yet the

ideals of Jesus heal its wounds and give it strength for new efforts. The Christianity the world has outgrown is a Christianity Christ had already outgrown, rather, it is a garment that never fitted him. No sooner does the world dispose of the claims of Christ than Christ presents a new claim of which the world as yet had not reckoned, and the disposing of the several claims of Jesus Christ constitutes the moral education of humanity. So Christ stands and knocks at the great house of human life, and as door after door yields to him, God dwells more and more with man, and man becomes more and more divine.

Yet these words were spoken by Christ of his reception by individual souls, of his relation to you and me. It is certainly on account of the vastness of his soul that Jesus is able to confront us all, to knock at all our doors, and it is the vastness of his love that makes him wish to gain us all. These two things are very different. If Jesus had merely possessed his transcendent greatness with but little love for the human race he would have a claim on us, he would have a great claim on us. We should be forced to measure ourselves against him. His life would be our despair, and yet it would incite many of us to pitch our lives high. But the love of Jesus establishes a very different claim on us from mere admiration of his greatness. It is a bond altogether personal that unites our soul to the soul of the Redeemer. Jesus loves us, he knows us, he dwells with us. That is a very different thing. Let me give you an example, Emerson's old

example. Some great man or woman comes to town, and we are invited to meet them. The hour, the place, the company are arranged to produce the effect. The great man speaks on the subject that makes his greatness, the brilliant woman utters a few brilliant things prepared for the occasion, or which, perhaps, she has said before. Anyway, they do not touch us much. We go home chilled and saddened by the impossibility of one human soul communicating itself to another. But then at home, without any effort or preparation, a friend, a sister, or a child comes to us sweetly and familiarly, takes us by the hand, and stirs the depths of our heart. "While we are musing, the fire burns, and at last we speak with our lips." It is this relation and not the first that Jesus wishes to occupy.

In this great city thousands of people pass our door every day, but we pay no attention to them. They are nothing to us and we are nothing to them. We do not dream of detaining them as they hurry past our door bent on their own business. It is different with those who stand before the door and ask for admission. They have some claim on our attention which we must recognize, if only to get rid of them. But among these how many come only to weary us or to ask favors of us, or because society demands that they should occasionally drop into our parlors and say a few soft nothings, and depart thinking that they have done their duty by us for at least a year. And yet even this poor "calling," which has become one of the dismalest

farces that we play on one another, is the shadow of a great reality. It is the relic of the sacred tie of hospitality, that people seek us because they love us, and that those whom we admit into our homes we admit into our hearts. But how different it is when a friend comes to us who really wishes us, who comes for what we alone can give him, or to communicate himself to us. How quickly the barriers are taken down, how gladly we abandon our shams, our solemn airs and pompous manners! What a blessing it is to be simple and easy and natural, to give something and to receive something! How we treasure such visits as among the real blessings of life! And after death or distance has parted us how sadly we look out of the window for the friend who stands before our door and knocks no more!

It is thus that Jesus comes. He comes to us because he wants to know us and because he wishes us to know him. He is not like men who, after they have knocked once or twice and are not admitted, go away in a rage. He stands sometimes for years, kingly in his humility, not minding the shame because he thinks not of himself but of us. If he thought of himself he would not come at all, or if he came and knocked once and was not admitted he would never knock again. He knocks in joy, asking to be permitted to come in and bless our joy. He knocks in sorrow, desiring to enter and to share our sorrow with us. He knocks with a pierced hand, that we may know that he who knocks has borne sorrows heavier than ours. We do not admit him. We will not let him come in. But we know he is there;

we have to pass him every time we go out or come in. Sometimes his mild eye falls on us, we realize who he is, and what he might be to us, and it troubles us. So we insult him, we try to drive him away, we congratulate ourselves that he is gone forever. But then amid scenes of senseless revelry, begun, perhaps, for the very purpose of banishing him and thought, in the silence of the night, in the solitude of our heart, we hear again that sound, not loud, not threatening, but sad and patient and full of memories; and though it reproaches us it has a familiar and friendly sound, and many an evil thing does not enter our house, and many a good thing goes out of it, simply because Jesus stands before the door and sees what comes in and what goes out.

Yet do not imagine for an instant that Jesus stands before your door like a poor lachrymose mendicant who has nowhere else to go. He stands there patiently, I know; he stands there humbly. Why, do you suppose, does he stand there at all? Many beings less than himself, forces, if we may believe the Scriptures, that obey his will, come and go as they please, without troubling themselves to knock at all, and, hateful as they are to you, you cannot exclude them. Jesus you can exclude easily. You lock your door against care, and care flies through the window. You hide yourself from him in your most secret place, and he sits on your breast, and lays his head beside you on the pillow, tormenting you all night long with one foreboding grief after another. You barricade your house against

sickness and death. You summon your allies to your aid, all the resources of wealth, science, devotion incarnate wearing the dress of a trained nurse. Death mocks at you. He dwells in the air you breathe, in the water you drink, in the food you eat. Poor Brother, you cannot exclude him. But though Jesus Christ holds in his hands the keys of death and of hell he will not place that key in your lock nor turn the handle of your door. That is his pride. He respects himself too much for that, and he respects you too much. He cares nothing for your house, with all its curiosities, its singular treasures, your luxury that begins on the kerbstone. They are nothing to him. He would come to you just as willingly in a stable, like the one in which he was born, for he seeks not yours, but you. But though the storms of life, nay, though God Himself, smote that barrier into fragments, though your mother, wife, and children stood there weeping and supplicating Jesus Christ to enter in and save you against your will he would refuse to violate the sanctity of your soul. Never will his foot cross the threshold of your individual life till you yourself invite him to enter. "No man can deliver his brother from death, nor make agreement unto God for him. For it costs more to redeem their souls, so that he must let that alone forever." "If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me."

That is the last thought I shall try to bring out of this wonderful parable. Sin enters our house and

defiles it. Care enters the door, and happiness flies out of the window. Death enters, and at his touch the sanctuary of our life is converted into four bare walls. Jesus enters to share with us our life, whatever it is, to repair what can be repaired, to bear with us what must be borne. He who sups with Jesus Christ sups well, though Christ and he now sit alone in silence in the room that a few days ago rang with the happy laughter of voices that are stilled forever. He who sups with Christ sups temperately, purely, happily. Christ has come in to share your life, to make it religious, and sweet, and beautiful. But that is not all: Christ also invites you to share his life. The first thing he asks of you is a gift, food to strengthen him that he may do more work. I think it is precisely because most Christians do not understand this that so many Christian lives fail to develop. They begin well; they do not keep Christ waiting long, they admit him almost as soon as he knocks. But that is the end. They have no gift for him; they do not bring forth the substance of their house to feed and strengthen him. They think they can keep Christ in their souls starved and idle. But Christ will not remain in our souls starved and idle. He has a work to do, and if we will not do it with him, he will do it without us. Christ did not come to us to offer us a selfish life of ease, but to invite us to take part with him in his great work of redemption.

When I see men and women who have lost their love for Jesus, and who smile at the innocent enthusiasm of

those who love him to foolishness, who think in their hearts that his redemption cannot redeem, and that we must look for another, I know without asking that they are men and women who are doing nothing for Christ, and are giving nothing to Christ, and that if he depended on them for his meat he must indeed starve, and if the success of his work rested with them it would come to nothing, as they suppose. And, on the other hand, it is precisely those who work for Jesus, who sacrifice on his altar, night by night, some petty passion, selfishness, and care, who offer to him every morning the homage of a glad and willing mind, to whom Jesus is a reality. Do they not sup with him? Do they not feed him and give him new strength? Strange as it may seem to you, Christ literally needs such food as we can give him. He must eat and drink in order to live and to grow, although, of course, his food is purely spiritual. Every new soul into which Jesus enters makes him greater precisely by the worth of that soul. Every new truth that is discovered adds luster to his truth. If not a heart upon this earth beat in response to the heart of Jesus Christ, he would disappear as if he had never existed. As far as this world is concerned he would indeed be dead. But that will never happen. For there are millions of hearts that beat in response to his heart, millions of lives consecrated to his ideal, millions of men who endeavor to time their feeble human steps to his gigantic march. This is the best gift Christ can bestow on us, the opportunity to share his work of the

redemption of mankind, and here is the work lying before us, and Christ within us to do it with us. Here is a vineyard in which no honest day's labor was ever lost, and in which not one laborer who has worked was ever cheated of his wages. Cease, then, to worry and to fret about yourself and to wonder if your soul is saved. To believe, myself, that is a simple matter; but to believe so as to make others believe—there is always something great in that. To be saved myself, that is a little thing. To save others, to make Christ believed in the world, to shed abroad his light and to annihilate the darkness, to show men how beautiful he is, and to make them love him—that is what I desire. And, Master, in spite of my unworthiness, let me do this for thee to the end.

THE END

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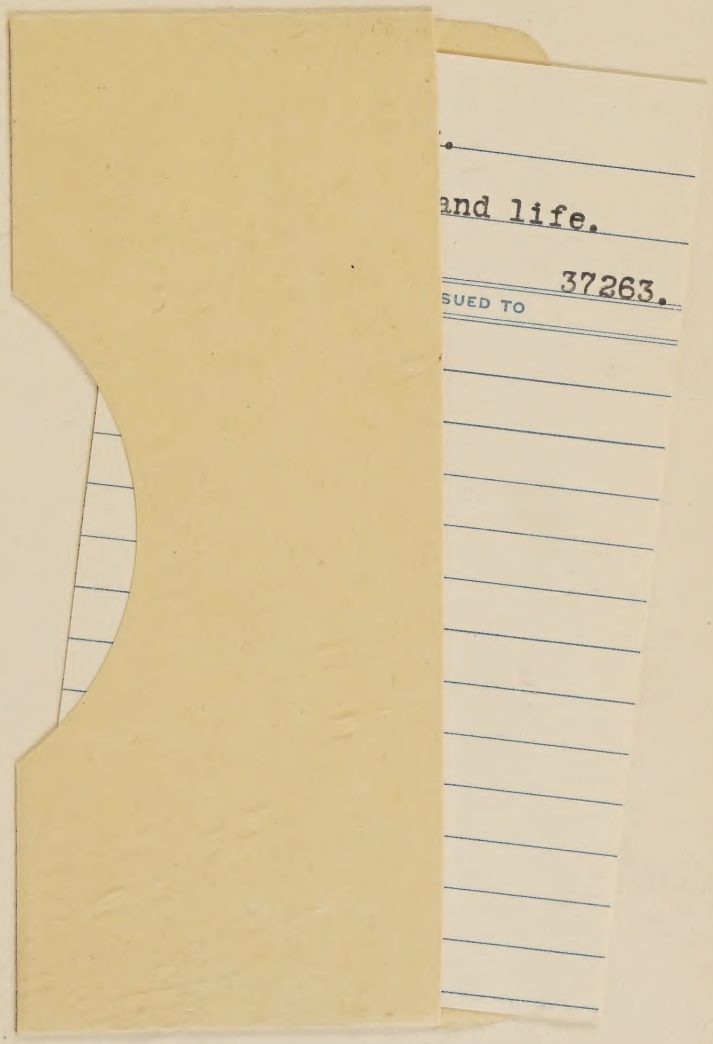
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